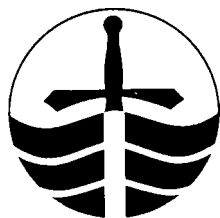
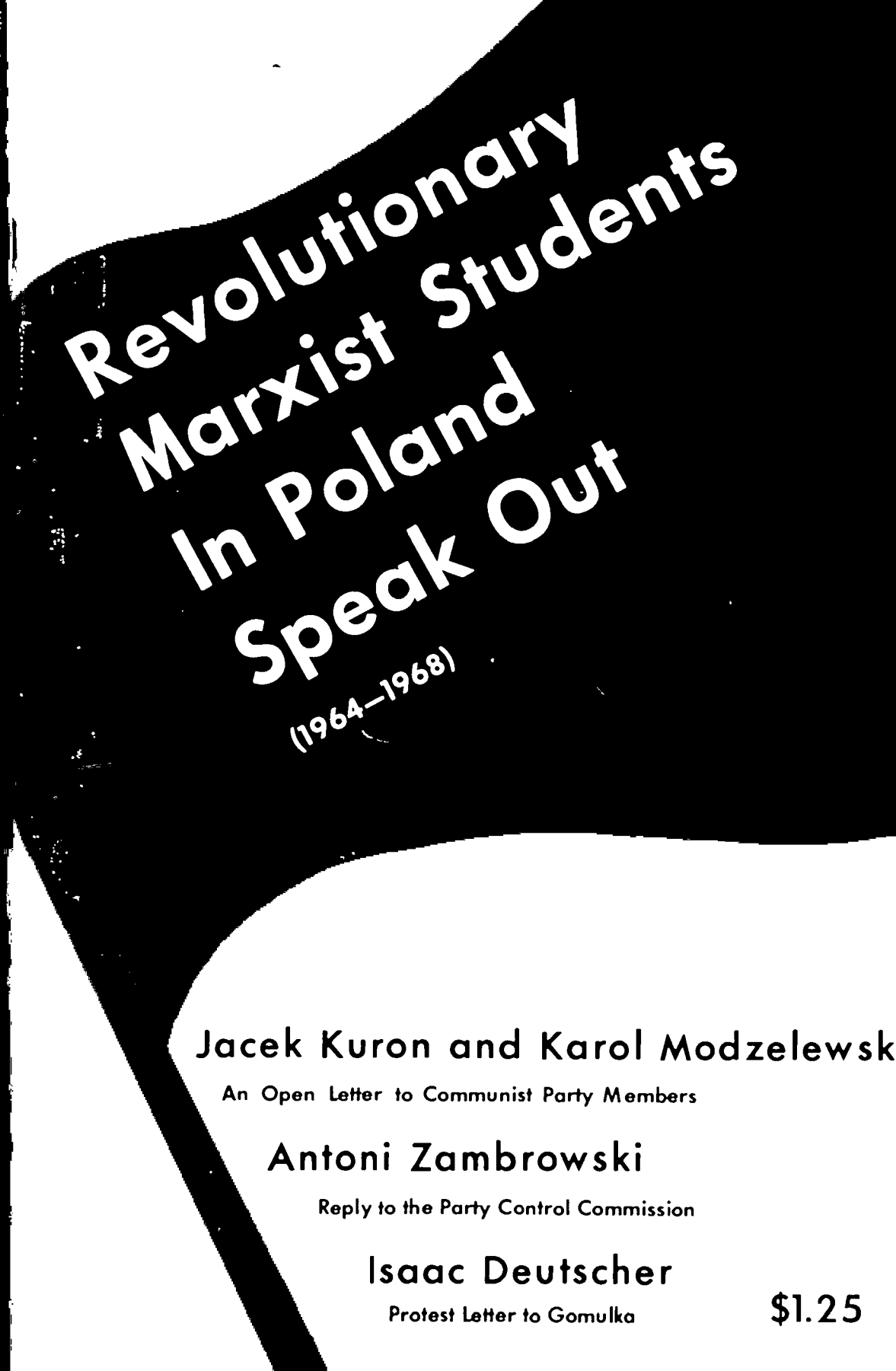


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# Revolutionary Marxist Students In Poland Speak Out

(1964-1968)

**Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski**

An Open Letter to Communist Party Members

**Antoni Zambrowski**

Reply to the Party Control Commission

**Isaac Deutscher**

Protest Letter to Gomulka

**\$1.25**

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## Preface

Though barely half over, 1968 is destined to be recorded in history as the year of massive and militant student demonstrations. While the worldwide wave of protests, rallies, marches, sit-ins, and battles with the police have brought consternation to the capitalist establishment of the West and the bureaucratic establishment of the deformed workers' states of the East, they have brought hope and inspiration to truly revolutionary socialist forces everywhere.

A characteristic commonly remarked by observers regardless of the immediate occasions of the protests -- which range from the Vietnam War, racism, censorship, and police brutality to educational procedures and university administrations -- is the students' expression of deep dissatisfaction with the quality of life, the established values, the system, i. e., with their societies as presently constituted. The students, in brief, are possessed of a revolutionary or pre-revolutionary temper.

The militant student movements of the various countries have another characteristic in common, but this is a negative one -- a lack of close ties with the working class. This shortcoming is crucial. For whatever advantages the students have in their articulateness and concentration in the huge modern educational factories cannot overcome the fact that by themselves they do not possess the numbers or social weight of a class which, by virtue of its essential role in production, can stop the functioning of the economy. Unless today's student rebels forge strong and intimate bonds with the working class, not only will they not achieve their aspirations for a thoroughgoing transformation of society but, sooner or later, their movement, despite all its militancy and courage, will be halted and smashed by the reigning power.

The lack of close ties with the workers' movement is not primarily the fault of the students. The relative passivity of the workers -- straitjacketed as they are in parties and unions dominated in the East European countries by the privileged bureaucracies and in the West by Stalinists, social-democrats, and pure-and-simple unionists -- is the overriding cause of the students' relative powerlessness and isolation. And, indeed, it would be foolish of the students to hold back their own radical development and actions in the hope that such restraint would allow the workers' organizations as presently constituted to catch up to them. No, the radicalism of the students induces thought among the workers, creates sympathy, and will evoke a response. This has been demonstrated beyond dispute by the catalyzing effect of the student actions in precipitating the unprecedented French general strike in May 1968.

But the students must be keenly conscious of the need for stirring the workers into action and taking whatever steps are possible to hasten this development. The marches of Berlin's student militants into the working-class neighborhoods to arouse solidarity, the appeals of the Columbia University students to the masses of Harlem, and most notably the swift orientation of the

French students to the workers just prior to and during the great general strike, are signs of the growing realization by student radicals that, while they can engage in skirmishes with the established power, the great revolutionary battle can take place only when the heavy battalions of labor come onto the field.

Consciousness in the student movement of the need for an alliance with the working class varies from country to country. In this regard the student movement in Poland, and in particular the writings of Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, are of the utmost interest and importance.

The modern student movement in Poland traces its origin to a common action with the workers. This was during the "Polish October" of 1956, when student contingents and factory workers stood shoulder to shoulder as the most militant and dependable forces in the confrontation with the Kremlin. Those students were the older brothers (and in many cases are now the university instructors) of the students who battled the police this March.

In the introduction to the French edition of Kuron and Modzelewski's Open Letter\* which follows this preface, Pierre Frank assesses the importance of that document from the Marxist viewpoint. Consequently, this preface will be limited to a brief account of the Polish student movement since 1964.

During 1963 and 1964, the Gomulka regime, which had come to power as a result of the unfinished political revolution of October 1956, dealt heavy blows to what little remained of the concessions in the field of freedom of expression won during the "Polish October." It shut down the leading liberal literary weeklies Nowa Kultura and Przegląd Kulturalny in June 1963. In 1964, the famous Letter of the Thirty-four (signed by prominent writers) to Premier Cyrankiewicz, requesting more freedom of expression, brought a vehement denunciation from on high. Finally, the party-sponsored discussion club at the University of Warsaw was dissolved. This had been the last forum where students and faculty members could express opinions and where serious students had attempted to use Marxism in analyzing social problems.

Apparently it was the closing of this discussion club that led Kuron and Modzelewski to begin writing the document which was seized by the authorities in November 1964 and was to lead to their imprisonment. In the interim they composed their Open Letter as a substitute for the confiscated document and circulated it as best they could.

They were brought to trial in July 1965, handcuffed before a closed court, and sentenced to three and three and a half years respectively. In a related trial in January 1966, three older members of the faculty at the University of Warsaw, Ludwik Hass, Romuald Smiech, and Kasimierz Badowski, were given three-year sentences. Hass, a veteran Trotskyist, had returned to Poland after seventeen years in Stalin's prison camps and continued to avow his views. He was freed early in September 1966. According to Huw Price in the British anarchist weekly Freedom, "This is partly due to the fear of embarrassment to the Government if he died in jail, since it is thought that he is in poor health.

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\* Lettre ouverte aux membres des sections de l'université de Varsovie du Parti ouvrier unifié polonais et de l'Union des jeunesses socialistes. Pierre Frank, Paris, 1966, Editions de la Quatrième Internationale, 100 pp.

It is also partly due to the demonstrations in England and America which singled out Hass as the main figure." In this connection it should be noted that Isaac Deutscher's letter to Gomulka (see page 94) had been made public the preceding April, and Deutscher had had discussions with Polish officials in London on behalf of the political prisoners.

That the regime's clemency towards Hass meant no relaxing of its drive against students and intellectuals was made clear with the expulsion of Lesek Kolakowski from the party on October 22. Kolakowski is Poland's most famous dissident intellectual, a figure of international standing. The youngest man ever to become a professor of philosophy at the University of Warsaw, he is today only forty-one.

He was a principal leader of the intellectuals during the "Polish October" and an editor of the left-wing weekly Po Prostu, which the Gomulka regime shut down in 1957. Thus he is a living link between the movement of 1956 and that of today. He has played a courageous role in defending intellectuals and student militants persecuted by the regime. He spoke out against the arrest of Kuron and Modzelewski and offered himself as a character witness for them at their trial.

The Gomulka regime held no commemoration meetings on October 21, 1966, the tenth anniversary of the "Polish October," but the socialist youth organization at the University of Warsaw did. The main speaker was Kolakowski. In a half-hour speech he drew a balance sheet of the ten years, critical of the regime's censorship and restriction of democratic rights. He was enthusiastically applauded and then a succession of student speakers took the rostrum and made much more radical speeches. The meeting reached a climax with the unscheduled introduction of a resolution demanding the release of Kuron and Modzelewski.

The regime retaliated the very next day by expelling Kolakowski from the United Polish Workers Party (Communist Party), though it did not as yet venture to dismiss him from his teaching post. The expulsion brought immediate protests from the student and intellectual community. Twenty-one writers belonging to the party signed a letter repeating Kolakowski's criticisms. Pressured to make retractions, the signers stood firm and reportedly suffered some reprisals.

In March 1967, University of Warsaw students protested the one-year suspension of Adam Michnik and five other students. The five were subsequently reinstated but the regime remained adamant on Michnik. He had been one of those who took the floor at the Tenth Anniversary meeting and had been prominent in the protests following Kolakowski's expulsion from the party. According to the notice posted by the official youth organization, however, Michnik was not being punished for those offenses but for attempts to "disrupt" the May Day parade the year before. At that time, the notice declared, he had led a group which had displayed "incorrect" slogans and had chanted before party leader Gomulka slogans demanding the freeing of Kuron and Modzelewski, reinstatement of the fired members of the philosophy faculty, a return to the ideas of October, and workers' democracy.

Seventy-one fellow students who came to Michnik's defense were also expelled from the official youth organization. They were among the more than 1,000 students and 150 professors who had petitioned the authorities to show leniency



to Michnik and the other five. All the protesters who belonged to the official youth organization were subjected to heavy pressure to withdraw their signatures, but few did so.

Soon another prosecution aroused student indignation. This was the case of 27-year-old Nina Karsov, the crippled survivor of a Jewish family murdered by the Nazis. After more than fifteen months in prison, where she was subjected to brutal mistreatment, she was sentenced on October 26, in a closed court, to three years. Among the evidence, allegedly hostile to the state, found in her possession and mentioned by the judge were: (1) a personal diary; (2) Kuron and Modzelewski's Open Letter; (3) a pamphlet entitled "What is Socialism"; (4) a pamphlet on the life of Polish university students; and (5) two tape recordings of satirical songs.

The odor of anti-Semitism and brutality surrounding the case aroused intense indignation among the students. A "letter from a group of Polish intellectuals," describing the case, was smuggled abroad to Bertrand Russell. He had it published in the London Guardian and cabled Gomulka a protest, asking that Nina Karsov be freed.

On January 30, 1968, the regime stopped performances of the classic Polish drama Dziady. This anti-Russian play by the nineteenth-century romantic poet and national revolutionary, Adam Mickiewicz, was being too heartily applauded by audiences at passages which could be taken to have contemporary political relevance. The banning led to student demonstrations in the streets around Warsaw's Mickiewicz monument. On March 2, in the first special meeting in its history, the Warsaw Writers Union, after heated debate, passed a resolution condemning the regime's cultural policy. More significantly, a resolution condemning anti-government demonstrations was defeated. The actors' organization took a similar stand.

The big student demonstrations began March 8 when 1,500 assembled in the University of Warsaw courtyard to protest the arrest of Adam Michnik and Henryk Szlajfer for having led the demonstrations against the banning of Dziady. The students demanded the release and reinstatement of their two comrades and shouted "Long Live the Writers!" and "Long Live Czechoslovakia!"

These demonstrations at first were orderly. Then the regime organized groups of club-carrying civilians, later officially described as "party activists," to break up the demonstrations. Whether from lack of zeal for dirty work or physical inability, these civilian gangs were unable to do the job, and Chief of Security Police Moczar sent special militia units onto the campus. As has been the case in country after country, the savagery of the specialists in police brutality infuriated the whole student body and brought tens of thousands of students into the fighting, which erupted onto the streets and spread throughout the city. On March 11, students and workers, who joined in sympathy, fought the police for eight hours.

Rapidly, solidarity actions by students spread throughout the country. Protest meetings were held in Lublin, Gliwice, Gdansk, Lodz, Szczecin, and Wroclaw. In Poznan, Cracow, and Katowice, demonstrators clashed with the police. In the latter two cities police used dogs against the demonstrators. Students in Cracow began a boycott of classes on March 14. The next day their example was followed by the students of Warsaw.

The Polish demonstrations had international repercussions. On March 13 a Communist youth rally in Prague voted solidarity with the Warsaw students. Also on March 13, a group of 500 students in West Berlin, most of whom had participated in the earlier anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, marched to the Polish consulate to express solidarity with the Warsaw students. In addition to red banners and a huge portrait of Trotsky, the young Germans, among them Peter Brandt, 19-year-old son of West German Foreign Minister Willi Brandt, bore aloft such slogans as "Against Stalinism in Poland" and "Against Cyrankiewicz's Instigation of an Anti-Semitic Pogrom." Denied entry at the Polish consulate, they read their solidarity statement over a loudspeaker and then fastened it to the building.

In Warsaw, meanwhile, boycotts and sit-ins spread to all eight institutions of higher learning. On March 19, Gomulka spoke to the nation, condemning the students and appealing for calm. He received his reply the next day when the students of Jagiellonian University in Cracow sat down and a meeting of the Warsaw Polytechnic School voted to do the same. At that meeting a solidarity message from factory workers in Wroclaw was read aloud. Working-class women brought bundles of food and blankets to the occupying students.

The regime, in a shameless move to divide the workers from the students, countered with propaganda to stir up traditional Polish anti-Semitism. Reviving the Stalin-era phraseology of "Zionists" and "cosmopolitans," it depicted the students as tools or agents of "Zionists, liberals and old Stalinists" and began a purge of Jews from party and government posts. At the same time, it resorted to wide-scale arrests. Known leaders such as Kuron and Modzelewski, who had been released from prison in 1967 after serving two-thirds of their sentences, were quickly rearrested as ringleaders; Adam Michnik and Antoni Zabrowski (see page 91) were also arrested. Already by April 8, the day of the first big demonstration, more than 1,200 students had been arrested. How many thousands were arrested by the end of March is not known. It is known, however, that many workers demonstrated their solidarity by taking up collections among their fellows to help pay the heavy fines imposed on those students who were not sentenced to prison or forcibly enrolled in the army.

Though the students had evoked widespread sympathy and benefited from many individual acts of solidarity by workers, there had been no mass actions on their behalf and consequently the regime was able to beat them down with the full force of its repressive machinery.

To the sit-ins at the Polytechnic School, surrounded by police, the regime broadcast over television a one-hour ultimatum (till 9 p.m.) to leave the buildings or to be expelled and put immediately into the army. Though the sit-ins defied this ultimatum and stayed on till dawn, they nonetheless left several hours before the end of the 48-hour occupancy originally voted.

At the University of Warsaw the occupying students shouted to a crowd of 10,000 assembled outside such slogans as "We are staying," "Workers with us," and "General Strike!" Then they joined in singing The International with the crowd.

The reprisals came hard and heavy. On March 25, Kolakowski and five Jewish professors were dismissed from their jobs. Among the accusations

against them were seeking to implant ideas hostile to the regime and abetting rebellious students "chiefly of Jewish origin." Among the student rebels named were Kuron, Modzelewski, Michnik, and Szlajfer. A meeting of 2,000 students three days later demanded the reinstatement of Kolakowski and the other professors and the dropping of charges against all students involved in the demonstrations. The authorities were given until April 22 (by which date the coming Easter vacation would be over) to meet these demands or face another demonstration.

University of Warsaw Rector Turski replied that numerous expulsions and suspensions had already been made and that "severe sanctions" would be meted out to those who had engaged in the unauthorized protest meeting. In language anticipating Columbia University President Grayson Kirk, it was declared that the demand that charges be dropped was "a concept of collective impunity." Two days later, the university closed eight departments and announced that the 1,300 students affected would have to apply for readmission. Existing student identity cards were declared invalid and new cards issued; police screened those entering university grounds. More professors were fired at the University of Warsaw and throughout the country. A purge of the Writers Union and cultural institutions began.

Following resumption of classes after Easter (it is not known how many were denied readmission), notices were read in all classes that the entire university would be closed if any meeting or demonstration took place on April 22. On April 21 preventive arrests of suspected troublemakers were made. No demonstration occurred on April 22. On May 16 a new system for selecting college entrants was announced. The applicant's political attitude would thenceforth be an important factor, and the party would have representation on all admission boards.

\* \* \*

Poland's population is the youngest in Europe; 66 percent is under 35 years of age. And though the students have been temporarily defeated, their March demonstrations constitute an important page in the history of the coming overthrow of the bureaucratic regime, which mismanages and battens on the nationalized economy while disgracing the name of socialism with tyranny and anti-Semitism. In their demonstrations the students gained much extracurricular political education and taught the Polish workers something too. That expulsions will make the universities docile is an illusion of the police mind. Nor will the agitators become any less so for having been put into the ranks of the army or dispersed in the general working population. They are the stormy petrels of the revolution in Poland and the other Soviet-bloc countries predicted and advocated by Kuron and Modzelewski.

\* \* \*

In closing, I should like to repeat a note which appeared in the French edition of Kuron and Modzelewski's Open Letter and add an American endorsement to it: "We want to give our warmest thanks to those friends, known and unknown, through whose efforts this document has reached us."

George Lavan Weissman  
June 10, 1968

## Introduction to the French Edition

By Pierre Frank

In July 1965 and again in January 1966 Warsaw was the scene of two trials which foreign correspondents linked together, due to the similarity of political views among the defendants, although the Polish courts did not bring out any organizational connections between them. In the first trial, the defendants were two university youths, Karol Modzelewski and Jacek Kuron. Modzelewski was the son of a Communist leader, now dead, who served as the first Minister of Foreign Affairs when the People's Republic of Poland was established. Karol Modzelewski was one of the leaders of the youth at the University of Warsaw in October 1956. Later he was a leading participant in a discussion circle at the university where he openly expressed opinions critical of the policies of the party and the government. Kuron was likewise the son of an old Communist cadre. Modzelewski was sentenced to three and a half years in prison, Kuron to three years.

The defendants in the second trial, Ludwik Hass, Romuald Smiech and Kazimierz Badowsky, belonged to the prewar generation. The latter two, professors of history and of political economy at the universities of Warsaw and Cracow, were sentenced to three years in prison, as was Ludwik Hass. Before the Second World War Hass belonged to the Polish Trotskyist organization. When the Soviet troops entered Poland in 1939, he was arrested and deported, spending the next seventeen years in the Soviet labor camps. According to the other prisoners who knew him, he conducted himself very courageously. Upon returning to Poland he publicly announced that he was a Trotskyist. He was active in a circle of intellectuals where he was noted for his exceptional contributions. He worked in the history section of the Central Committee of the Polish trade unions.

Thus the men who were condemned always took public positions, publicly voiced the opinions for which they were imprisoned, although it would have been perfectly in order for them to work in an underground way. The government's subsequent attitude is proof enough of this, if justification is still needed. Since they took public positions not on passing questions but on the most general problems facing Polish society, it was logical to suppose that they had made notes. A search of Modzelewski's home in November 1964 by the police brought to light an uncompleted study of 128 mimeographed pages. The existence of this document resulted in the expulsion of Modzelewski and Kuron from the party and from the youth organization, although the document was not made available to the bodies engaged in their expulsion.

Modzelewski and Kuron were released but felt that they were being watched and that they would be arrested again, this time for a longer period. They wrote an "Open Letter" to those called on to ratify the expulsions. In it they set down the opinions which they had advanced publicly. This document began to circulate clandestinely. Last spring Kultura, the organ of the Polish bourgeois emigration, complained that Modzelewski and Kuron, under the influ-

ence of Marxist "dogmatism," had refused to let the "Open Letter" be sent to them. But this August, Kultura published the "Open Letter" as a pamphlet. It is doubtful that the authors of the document had changed their views concerning Kultura in the meantime. In any case, we are publishing the "Open Letter." The Polish text that reached us bore certain differences, generally small ones, from the one published by Kultura.

\* \* \* \* \*

Modzelewski's and Kuron's "Open Letter" was written at the beginning of 1965. Its exceptional interest cannot fail to impress everyone who reads it. To begin with it is the first revolutionary Marxist document to appear in any workers' state since the physical annihilation of the Left Opposition and the assassination of Trotsky. This alone suffices to give the document great historic interest. But it reveals, in addition, the very high level of Marxist culture of its authors and their capacity to undertake a rigorous analysis of Polish society and to formulate, under the difficult conditions in which they lived, a valid program for a genuine revolutionary party of the Polish working class.

On the basis of official statistics, they draw a faithful picture of the living conditions of the workers, the peasants, technicians, etc., since the establishment of the new Poland. It is not necessary in this introduction to dwell on this very important part of the document. We will mention only that the authors strongly underline the fact that the stabilization that came rather soon after the Polish October of 1956 was made possible by economic reserves accumulated in preceding years, that the effect of the modifications secured through the October 1956 movement has now worn off and that new reforms will have little efficacy. On this point, their conclusions coincide with those reached by the Fourth International in drawing up a balance sheet of the "de-Stalinization" following the Twenty-Third Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The authors of the "Open Letter" show the power of their thought not only in their analysis of the situation since the establishment of the new Poland but also in their formulation of a program that would enable the working class to lead Polish society out of the crisis, in which it has been landed by bureaucratic management, and toward socialism. This program offers not only measures for the immediate improvement of living conditions for the workers and measures to end the stagnation in agriculture. It likewise offers an entire solidly reasoned section dealing with the structure of the country that condemns without reservation any retreat in a rightist direction and places complete confidence in the working class--calling for the formation of Workers' Councils and a Central Council of workers' delegates, election and recall of delegates, plurality of parties (specified as political groups recognized by the working class), independence of the unions from the state, recognition of the right to strike, education of the workers on general economic problems, suppression of the political police, suppression of the standing army, arming of the working class. The program also offers a foreign-policy section that denounces the nationalism of the bureaucracy and expresses unyielding confidence in the potentialities of genuine proletarian internationalism in assuring solidarity with respect to every working-class movement directed against imperialism or against a ruling bureaucracy.

Modzelewski and Kuron present this program for an antibureaucratic proletarian revolution which they conceive as part of the revolutionary struggle

for socialism on a world scale. The program as a whole is reminiscent in concept and often even in its formulations of the program of political revolution outlined for the USSR by Trotsky in The Revolution Betrayed.

The power of the thinking shown in this document cannot be stressed too much. Modzelewski and Kuron do not hesitate to make an acute criticism of the policies followed by those whom they call the "October left." By this they refer to those elements (to whom they belonged) who, in October 1956, in the movement that brought Gomulka to power, instinctively sought the restoration of workers' democracy. They accuse the left of that time of failing to formulate a clear program and of failing to differentiate themselves from the liberal currents in the bureaucracy. Having participated in the October 1956 movement with the legitimate hopes of young Communists and having seen that movement then disintegrate, they developed their reflections with admirable consistency, expressing them without concern for their personal fate.

\* \* \* \* \*

This program, in our opinion, was inspired by the same considerations underlying the program of political revolution advanced by Trotsky and the Fourth International for the Soviet Union and comes very close to it. Nevertheless, it would not be right to pass by in silence an important theoretical difference between Modzelewski's and Kuron's document on the one hand and the position of Trotsky and the Fourth International on the other. It is well known that the Trotskyist movement has characterized the Soviet Union and the other states having the same social structure as workers' states, bureaucratically degenerated or deformed as the case may be, and that they have combatted without quarter any idea suggesting that they are "state capitalist," or a new form of exploiting society in which the bureaucracy is depicted as a "new exploiting class" (Burnham's "managers," Djilas's "new class," etc.). The theory advanced by Modzelewski and Kuron is very specific. The label of exploiting class is generally applied to the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and the other comparable states; they are not in accord with this. They see a difference between the technicians on the one hand and the central political bureaucracy on the other; and it is only the latter social layer--a very thin one according to the authors themselves--which they characterize as a ruling class in the new society where it collectively owns the means of production and management of the state, as they put it. On the basis of this concept, Modzelewski and Kuron distinguish between a bureaucratic social system and a technocratic social system, the model of which, according to them, is provided at present by Yugoslavia. In connection with this, they offer a searching criticism of "workers' self-management" of the kind to be seen in Yugoslavia--lacking democracy on a national scale. Their document presents an illuminating demonstration of the fact that the "self-management" which Liberman and other reformers seek at present in Soviet society, constitutes the program of the technicians who are demanding a higher standard of living and increased privileges in order to assure a more favorable growth in production.

The difference between Modzelewski's and Kuron's theory and the multiple theories about a new exploiting class lies less in the assertion of a difference between the ruling political bureaucracy and the technicians--which testifies more to the subtlety of the argument--than in a fundamental difference: They stand on a completely different class level than most of those who have been fought by Trotsky and the Fourth International. Among almost all the theoreticians of a new class, the revolt against Stalin and the post-Stalinists has

ended in denial of the validity of Marxism, in skepticism toward the working class and socialism, in adulation of bourgeois democracy. Denunciation of the crimes of the Kremlin has brought many of them into the wake of Washington. There is absolutely nothing of this in Modzelewski and Kuron. They denounce capitalism, particularly bourgeois democracy. They have confidence in the capacity of the proletariat to accomplish its historic mission. They support Marxism without reserve and strike strong blows to remove the Stalinist encrustation that has disfigured it for so long. That is why we think that the difference between them and the Trotskyist movement is terminological rather than political in nature.

In his polemics on the class nature of the Soviet Union, Trotsky indicated that such cases do arise. We cannot do better than cite what he wrote during the last great controversy which he engaged in immediately after the Hitler-Stalin Pact was signed, during the first month of the Second World War:

"Let us begin by posing the question of the nature of the Soviet state not on the abstract sociological plane but on the plane of concrete political tasks. Let us concede for the moment that the bureaucracy is a new 'class' and that the present regime in the USSR is a special system of class exploitation. What new political conclusions follow for us from these definitions? The Fourth International long ago recognized the necessity of overthrowing the bureaucracy by means of a revolutionary uprising of the toilers. Nothing else is proposed or can be proposed by those who proclaim the bureaucracy to be an exploiting 'class.' The goal to be attained by the overthrow of the bureaucracy is the re-establishment of the rule of the soviets, expelling from them the present bureaucracy. Nothing different can be proposed or is proposed by the leftist critics. It is the task of the regenerated soviets to collaborate with the world revolution and building of a socialist society. The overthrow of the bureaucracy therefore presupposes the preservation of state property and of planned economy. Herein is the nub of the whole problem.

"Needless to say, the distribution of productive forces among the various branches of economy and generally the entire content of the plan will be drastically changed when this plan is determined by the interests not of the bureaucracy but of the producers themselves. But inasmuch as the question of overthrowing the parasitic oligarchy still remains linked with that of preserving the nationalized (state) property, we called the future revolution political. Certain of our critics (Ciliga, Bruno and others) want, come what may, to call the future revolution social. Let us grant this definition. What does it alter in essence? To those tasks of the revolution which we have enumerated it adds nothing whatsoever.

"Our critics as a rule take the facts as we long ago established them. They add absolutely nothing essential to the appraisal either of the position of the bureaucracy and the toilers, or of the role of the Kremlin on the international arena. In all these spheres, not only do they fail to challenge our analysis, but on the contrary they base themselves completely upon it and even restrict themselves entirely to it. The sole accusation they bring against us is that we do not draw the necessary 'conclusions.' Upon analysis it turns out, however, that these conclusions are of a purely terminological character. Our critics refuse to call the degenerated workers' state--a workers' state. They demand that the totalitarian bureaucracy be called a ruling class. The revolution against this bureaucracy they propose to consider not political but social. Were

we to make them these terminological concessions, we would place our critics in a very difficult position, inasmuch as they themselves would not know what to do with their purely verbal victory.

"It would therefore be a piece of monstrous nonsense to split with comrades who on the question of the sociological nature of the USSR have an opinion different from ours, insofar as they solidarize with us in regard to the political tasks."\*

With Trotsky it was not a matter of abstract speculation, or even of innovation, properly speaking. In the course of the struggle against rising Stalinism in 1926-1927, the Left Opposition was made up not only of a bloc between Trotsky's faction and Zinoviev's faction. The faction of so-called democratic centralism (the "Decemists" of V. Smirnov, Saprionov, etc.), who denied that the Soviet state was a workers' state, signed the platform of the Left Opposition submitted at the 15th Congress. In the case of the young Polish revolutionists, now imprisoned, we must take into account the fact that the bureaucracy in power has deprived them of documentary sources of the history of the Left Opposition and of the possibility of exchanging views on an international level. Thus the nearness of the "Open Letter" to the positions of our movement is infinitely more important to us than the difference in question.

In Trotsky's view, however, agreement on political tasks could not be permitted to shunt aside discussions on theoretical or even terminological differences. In the article cited above, he likewise said:

"But, on the other hand, it would be blindness on our part to ignore purely theoretical and even terminological differences, because in the course of further development they may acquire flesh and blood and lead to diametrically opposite political conclusions."

This introduction is not the place to conduct such a debate; here we will make only a few brief observations. Modzelewski's and Kuron's theoretical generalization is based on a real fact--the omnipotence of the central political bureaucracy in states like Poland. But this omnipotence does not make it a collective owner. The authors of the "Open Letter" recognize that in these countries there is no market in the means of production (outside of the labor-power of the workers), the bureaucracy does not itself buy the means of production which it disposes of as it wishes. It disposes of them--the term is an excellent one. State property and planning are not sufficient to characterize a society as socialist, but neither do they convert such a restricted group as a central political bureaucracy into the owner of the means of production in a period when, for specific passing reasons, it disposes of them almost without control. In our opinion, Modzelewski and Kuron fall into a confusion similar to that, mutatis mutandis, of the theoreticians who present the managers of monopoly capitalism as a class opposed to the stockholders. The management function is dissociated from that of ownership, it is not suppressed. The managers are capitalists quite as much as the stockholders. Analogously the central political bureaucracy cannot be opposed socially to the technicians. In the Soviet Union and in the East European states, it should likewise be noted that the technicians do not call

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\* "The USSR in War," September 25, 1939. See pp. 4-5, In Defense of Marxism, by Leon Trotsky, New York: Merit Publishers, 1966.



for any profound political overturn, for any social rearrangement; their program calls for an adjustment of the economy to increase their benefits and guarantee their status. From Stalin, the most omnipotent of the "political bureaucrats," to Kosygin, an eminent technician, there has been no break in continuity.

In their document, Modzelewski and Kuron declare that the regime of the central political bureaucracy was "objectively useful" for a certain period when Poland, following the war, began economic construction, but that in less than ten years it became pernicious to the development of the productive forces, the interests of the political bureaucracy being contrary to those of the immense majority of the population. History has never provided an example of a ruling class becoming a brake or an obstacle to the development of the productive forces within a few years. What is involved is a social layer brought to power under exceptional circumstances and exercising because of this an economic and political dictatorship that has no historical legitimacy and whose temporary "utility" is very questionable.

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As we were writing these lines, we learned that Ludwik Hass had been freed at the end of August or beginning of September. But the others are still in prison.

The arrests and sentences were strongly resented among the Polish intellectuals and university youth. Foreign correspondents in Warsaw have noted this. At Modzelewski's and Kuron's trial, some eminent figures, the physicist Infeld, the philosopher Kolakowski, the critic Slonimski, and others served as character witnesses for the defendants.

Outside of Poland, one of the first protests came from the Vietnam Day Committee at the University of California in Berkeley. These youth who stand in the front line of the struggle in the United States against the imperialist aggression in Vietnam sent a protest:

"We the undersigned, who have protested and will continue to protest violations of freedom in our own country, and who are engaged even now in defending the civil liberties of American dissidents such as the W. E. B. DuBois Clubs and others who have come under government attack, are appalled that Polish citizens Hass, Modzelewski, Smiech, Badowski and Kuron have been sentenced to imprisonment for the exercise of political rights which we regard as elementary. We protest this repression of freedom. We demand that the defendants be released and that their political rights, including their rights to distribute literature of protest and organize political opposition, be affirmed."

We quote from a letter of protest sent by Isaac Deutscher April 24 to Gomulka and the Central Committee of the Polish party:

"You have not, as far as I know, jailed and put in chains any of your all too numerous and virulent anti-Communist opponents; and you deserve credit for the moderation with which you treat them. But why do you deny such treatment to your critics on the Left? Hass, Modzelewski and their friends have been brought to the courtrooms handcuffed and under heavy guard. Eye-witness accounts say that they raised their chained fists in the old Communist salute and sang the Internationale. This detail speaks eloquently about their political characters and loyalties. How many of your dignitaries, Wladyslaw Gomulka,

would nowadays intone the Internationale of their own free will and choice?"

The political, intellectual and moral courage of these prisoners measures up to the best revolutionary tradition, measures up to those victims of Stalin whom they claim as their own--the old Polish Communist Party formed by Rosa Luxemburg and the Soviet Left Opposition organized by Leon Trotsky. The publication of this pamphlet is for us more than a task of providing political information; it is above all an appeal for international solidarity to help win their freedom.

Paris, France  
September 24, 1966

Open Letter to Members of the University of Warsaw Sections of the United  
Polish Workers Party and the Union of Young Socialists

By Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski

Authors' Introduction

Both of us were expelled from the party by the Section Committee of the University of Warsaw on November 24, 1964. Then, on December 14, Karol Modzelewski was expelled also from the youth organization by the University Committee of the Union of Socialist Youth (ZMS). These expulsions were based on the fact that we had drawn up a document analyzing the present situation in Poland and setting forth a draft program. This document was seized on November 14, the day of our arrest by the secret police. The Bureau of Investigation of the Ministry of the Interior is now conducting an inquiry as to a violation of Sections 1 and 2 of Article 155 of the 1932 Penal Code. Comrades Stanislaw Gomolka and Joanna Majerczyk have been expelled from the party in connection with our case, and Comrade Eugeniusz Chyla has been removed from the list of candidates for membership in the party. Comrades Gomolka and Chyla were also expelled from the Union of Socialist Youth. Although Comrades Gomolka and Chyla took no part in the work on our document, they were accused of having partially solidarized themselves with it as well as with our attitude and opinions. This Open Letter is written solely on our own initiative and in our own names and not in the names of the other comrades expelled from the party as a consequence of our case.

The party officials and the authorities of the Ministry of the Interior have given this case a considerable celebrity. We do not care to discuss the public statements made by certain party activists and high officials of the Ministry of the Interior outside of the University. Within the university similar reports were given to meetings of the bureau of the Student Association, to the bureau of the party unit of the Kickiego Street dormitory, to the University Committee of the ZMS, and to an election assembly of the University section of the ZMS. Meetings concerning our case were held in the party units in the schools of psychology, education, history, political economy (twice) and philosophy. Since the resolution expelling us was adopted in the name of the University Section, all its members should be informed of it. We expect then that our case will be discussed in every faculty cell as well as at the meetings of the ZMS.

Since we are no longer members of the party, we can no longer take part in its meetings. We are therefore unable to reply to the accusations against us or even to correct the official version which distorted our views and put them in a false light. Most party members at the university have not read our document and know nothing about it but what they are told by the secretaries and activists of the University Committee, who almost alone in the party -- and even more so in the ZMS--have real knowledge of it. This is true to such a degree that, while the University Committee of the ZMS had to vote on the expulsion of three comrades, it did not have access to our document and had to content itself with the report of the Executive Bureau and the plenum resolution of the party's University Committee.

It is common knowledge that by quoting this or that sentence out of context any document can be put in a false light. In our opinion, the official reports about our document are characterized by gross liberties with respect to the document itself. Quoting a few or at most a score of phrases chosen at will, they give the impression that the document is a tangle of violent, empty, rabble-rousing slogans which for some strange reason take up 128 typewritten pages. Whatever may be said about the soundness of our analysis and the political worth of the conclusions we draw from it, it forms a logical whole, however, and can be refuted only by criticism of its central argument, not by shocking the reader or listener with quotations torn out of context and given meanings contrary to their real ones. The official accounts, moreover, not only do not say one word about the document's analysis but are content to counter its programmatic section, which is key to an understanding of its political character, with a few tired catchwords. The official accounts and pronouncements finally resort to the use of invective against the document ("crude demagoguery") and the intellectual and moral caliber of its authors ("hypocrisy," "lack of honesty" and even "lack of civic courage"). We come across distortions we can scarcely believe are the results of ignorance (it is alleged that we demand that the workers keep the entire product of their labor and that we incite workers to reduce labor productivity in order to lessen exploitation).

In these circumstances we consider it necessary to declare our real views, and the political position flowing from them, to party and ZMS members at the University of Warsaw--and the only means available to us for doing so is an Open Letter. We address ourselves to the members of the party and to members of the party-guided youth organization despite the fact that our views and the document we have written have been called "antiparty." If this hackneyed term is intended to mean that we hold a position opposed to the political practices of the party and that we view its social role as negative, we do not protest its use in our regard. But to the accusation of hypocrisy and dishonesty toward our party comrades we reply:

1) We reached our present position progressively and through a slow evolution of our views, partly in the course of, and as a result of our work on our document, to which we devoted nearly six months; but we were influenced principally by the political and social situation in our country and our experiences in the party and in the ZMS during the past year (the closing of the discussion club, the party's attitude toward the letter of the thirty-four intellectuals and the meeting of April 14, 1964, the suppression of discussion in the ZMS solely by disciplinary procedures, etc.).

2) Our views were opposed to the party leadership's present policy, and this was known to all because we said so publicly, both in the discussion club and in party and ZMS meetings--often despite the advice of party authorities. This brought warnings and sanctions down on us from those who refrained from expressing their views (in the political club, for example) and who now accuse us of hypocrisy. Finally--even before we were expelled from the party and the ZMS--we were deprived of our right to function politically in the youth organization which, at the university, is tantamount to a ban on all political activity in general.

3) We had intended, as soon as we had finished our document, to

publicize its basic propositions at all available forums and then, our political motivation being clear, to resign from the party. The document was not finished (it lacks two chapters; furthermore the chapters on economics are only a first draft, not the definitive form of the analysis, and still require polishing).

After the Ministry of the Interior stepped in, the party authorities took up the case and we were expelled from the party and the ZMS. Under these circumstances we believe that the meaning of our departure from the party is quite clear and not subject to dispute, despite the form and circumstances in which it took place. This means that we have parted company politically from our comrades in the party and the ZMS. However, this difference of opinion does not in any way lessen our respect for their convictions or for them personally. It is this respect which, even in the presence of deep differences of political principle and outlook, demands an honest reporting of the facts and impels us to present to the members of the party and the ZMS of the University of Warsaw a summary of the analysis and program contained in the document seized by the Ministry of the Interior, and which constitutes the ideological platform on which we now stand.

## Chapter I

### THE BUREAUCRATIC STATE

According to official doctrine, we are living in a socialist country. This contention rests on the identification of state ownership of the means of production with their social ownership. The act of nationalization is supposed to have transferred industry, transport, and the banks to full social ownership, and the relationships based on social ownership are by definition supposed to be socialist.

This sounds like Marxist logic. But in reality it introduces a fundamentally alien concept into Marxism, namely, the formalistic, legal notion of ownership. The concept of state property can conceal different social contents, depending on the class character of the state. The public sector of the national economies of the capitalist countries has nothing in common with social ownership; not only because private capitalist corporations operate outside this sector, but particularly because the workers in the state-owned factories have no real share in their ownership since they have no say in running the state and, therefore, no control over their own labor and its product. History has seen examples of societies composed of antagonistic classes wherein state ownership of the means of production was the dominant property form (the Asiatic mode of production).

State ownership of the means of production is only a property form; the property belongs to the social groups controlling the state. In a nationalized economic system only those who participate in the decision-making by governmental bodies, or those who have some influence on these bodies, can influence the mass of economic decisions (consequently the use of the means of production and the division and utilization of the social product). Political power is linked to power over the process of production and distribution.

Who has the power in our state? One party has a monopoly, the United Polish Workers Party. All key decisions are made in the party first and only afterwards in the official organs of state power. No decision of importance can be made and implemented without prior sanction by the party authorities. This is what is called the leading role of the party and, since the monopolistic party considers that it represents the interests of the working class, its authority is supposed to insure workers' power.

However, if we choose not to judge the system by the views and pronouncements of its officials, we should see how much voice the workers have in the decisions of the state power.

Outside the party, they have none. The ruling party enjoys a monopoly of power. The workers cannot organize other parties to formulate and put forth different programs, to fight for different proportions in the division

of the national income, for political views other than the program and views of the United Polish Workers Party. Enforcing this ban is the entire state apparatus with its administrative bodies, political police, courts and the political organizations guided by the party, which nip in the bud every attempt to question the party's leading role.

The more than one million party members are ordinary citizens like others; there are only a few hundred thousand workers among them. What voice do they have in the decisions of the party authorities and therefore on the state's powers? Not only doesn't the party share power with anyone outside it, its internal organization is based on the same monopolistic principle. All fractions, political groupings, or organized tendencies are forbidden. The rank-and-file member has a right to his own opinion, but he has no right to have an organizational connection with co-thinkers in the party around a common program, nor to propagate common views, or to campaign in party elections for implementation of those views. Elections to party bodies and elections of delegates to party conventions and congresses become a fiction in such circumstances for they are not conducted on the basis of different platforms and programs (which would make a real political choice possible) whereas the prerequisite for political initiative by the masses is organization. As for making any attempt to influence the decisions at the "top," the mass of party members are disorganized, atomized, and thus impotent.

Of necessity, then, the sole source of political initiative is the party leadership, the apparatus. Information circulates from the bottom up; orders, from the top down. As in any hierarchical apparatus, commands issue from an elite, a group occupying the responsible posts in the hierarchy, who collectively work out the key decisions. In our system, the party elite is the governmental elite as well. It makes the decisions for the state apparatus, and in the upper levels of the state and party hierarchies there is a general tendency to the holding of multiple posts. As the wielder of state power, this hierarchy has the nationalized means of production at its disposal, decides on the relative importance of consumption and investment, on the choice of sectors for investment, on each social group's share in the enjoyment of the national income, in brief, on the distribution and use of the entire social product.

The decisions of the elite are sovereign and made without consulting the workers or the rest of society. Neither the workers nor the mass of the party members can influence these decisions. Elections to parliament and the local governing bodies become a fiction since there is only one list of candidates--handed down from the "top"--and there are no programmatic differences between the United Polish Workers Party and its satellite parties, the People's Party and the Democratic Party. We shall call this autocratic, party-state ruling elite, which on its own makes all key decisions of national importance and all political and economic decisions, the central political bureaucracy.

Membership in the central political bureaucracy means real participation in shaping the basic political and economic decisions of national importance. It is virtually impossible to make an exact calculation of the size of this elite--an approximate estimate would require sociological research into a completely tabooed area. But what it is important for us to know about the bureaucracy is by no means its numbers and internal organization, but its

role in society and in the process of social production. For disorganized though ordinary party members may be for any attempt to sway the decisions of the bureaucracy, they are well organized by party discipline for carrying out the tasks assigned to them. Anyone who balks is expelled, and, from the moment he is outside the party, he is without the right to organize and hence to act. Thus the party, which at the top levels is no more than the organized bureaucracy, is at its base an instrument to frustrate any attempts by the workers to resist or to exert any influence on the government. At the same time, the party organizes the working class and the other social strata in obedience to the bureaucracy. The same role is played by the other social organizations under party leadership, including the trade unions. These, the traditional organizations of workers' economic self-defense, under the direction of the only organized political force, the party, have become passive and obedient tools of the bureaucracy or, in other words, of the political and economic power of the state. The working class has been deprived of its organizations, its program, and its means of self-defense.

The bureaucracy thus holds all political and economic power, depriving the workers not only of power and control but of the means to defend themselves. Along with all this, the leaders of the bureaucracy consider themselves the representatives of the interests of the working class! If we want to judge this system not by its leaders' pronouncements but by the actual facts, we must analyze the class character of the bureaucracy. The fact that it holds power neither predetermines its class nature nor satisfactorily explains it. What is decisive in this regard is the productive relationships. We must then examine the process of production and the relationships entered into by the workers, the basic creator of the national income, on the one hand, and by the central political bureaucracy, the holder of the means of production, on the other.



## Chapter II

### WAGES, SURPLUS PRODUCT, AND OWNERSHIP

Who creates the national income, and how is it shared? According to Marxist theory the national income is created in the realm of material production, that is, in industry, construction, partly in transport, agriculture, and the skilled crafts.

The producer of national income in industry is "aggregate" labor, that is all workers who set up, carry out, and maintain the technical process of production, hence--in addition to the directly or indirectly productive workers--the engineers and technicians, the technical intelligentsia.

On the other hand, those who do not watch over the technical process of production but supervise the maintenance of a given state of relations among those engaged in this process, the overseers of wage labor, the technocrats, are not productive workers. It is true that they also insure production, but in the same sense as the slavemasters of antiquity, the stewards of the feudal manors, and capitalist plant managers today. Their job is to maintain the prevailing production relations and not the material process of production proper. (This distinction is, of course, abstract since supervisors usually carry out technical as well as social functions, but technical productive tasks predominate in the jobs of foremen and middle-rank engineers, while organizational tasks are predominant in the job of plant managers, i. e., supervision of people and the preservation of a given state of production relations in the plants they run.)

In agriculture, the productive workers are the independent peasants, the state-farm workers, and the members of producers' cooperatives (few in our country). In small-scale production of items of general utility in the cities and towns, the productive workers are the craftsmen.

Recently the thesis has been advanced that the Marxist concept limiting creation of the national income to the realm of material production is out of date. The national income is now supposed to be the product of all who work. It is claimed that in the service sector taken in the broadest sense (i. e. everything outside the sphere of material production), production and consumption needs are indirectly satisfied and the life of society as a whole is organized; in other words, that in response to vital social needs a given amount of labor is expended.

Such an argument would be justified, however, only in a society where a fair exchange of products and services took place, i. e. on the condition that the material-goods producer received, in the form of services rendered him and not to a third party, the equivalent of the share of the product of his labor that he relinquishes to support the service sector, and on the condition also that the capital investment serve his interests. If these conditions are not met, calling all work (including that of police, judges, army

officers, and innkeepers) productive labor is in fact covering up exploitation. Following this line of reasoning, the total national income, save for the share reserved to the capital investment fund, would equal the sum of wages of all categories of workers and therefore the remuneration of "productive labor."

The same argument could be used to mask the exploitation that exists in capitalist society: Apart from the individual consumption of material goods by the capitalists (which is a very small part of the social product and even of the incomes of this class), total national income would equal the wages and incomes of the material-goods producers, the wages of other workers directly employed by the capitalists or the state, and the share allocated to investment. This sort of reasoning has nothing in common with objective scientific analysis. It is nothing but an apology for the existing social order.

We choose methods of reasoning which enable us to analyze contradictions, not to hide them. Therefore, following Marx, we say that the national income is the objectified labor of productive workers in the realm of material production. Capital investment and services in the broad sense are supported by the product created in the sector of material production: Supplying the investment fund and paying for the police, army, culture, health, etc., thus are done out of the national income. Aside from those services the workers pay for out of their own pockets, all the others are supported by the unpaid product of the labor of the workers and peasants--the surplus product. We must therefore examine the distribution of this surplus product to determine in whose interest it is used.

The basic groups producing the national income in our country are the workers and independent peasants. What share do they get in the division of the product of their labor?

The independent peasants bring the product of their labor to the market. But 75 per cent of what they produce on their plots is sold to the state as a middle man who buys these products at prices averaging 40 per cent below market prices. Furthermore, the prices of agricultural products are set by the state, with its monopoly power over the market, at a rate unfavorable to the peasants by comparison with the prices of industrial products. We shall leave this question for the moment, but shall return to it in our analysis of the situation in agriculture.

The workers' share in the national income is determined primarily by the amount of their wages. What are the prevailing wage rates in our country, and what determines them?

According to Professor Kalecki's estimates, the average real income of workers in 1960, who were doing the same type of work as before the war, was about 45 per cent higher than in 1937. (For the same work the increase in real wages was lower because of the more rapid increase in social consumption and the rise in income due to moonlighting.) As for the cost of living, postwar statistics do not take account of the hidden rise in prices and thus understate its increase.

Let us assume, however, that Professor Kalecki's estimates are generally correct. The wage increase over the period 1949-1960 occurred primarily in 1956-1959. This was an exceptional period for the regime. The polit-

ical crisis, the cracks in party monolithism, the strikes and collective demands for wage increases, a brief flowering of workers' councils--elected by the workers up to the middle of 1958 and independent of the party apparatus--had relatively weakened the power structure. In these conditions the working class won a 30 per cent increase in real wages in less than four years, and obtained at least three-quarters of the total increase in real income per worker since 1937.

In the period 1949-1955, the increase in real wages was barely perceptible. The same holds true for the period after 1959; according to the analysis of family budgets made by GUS,\* real income per capita for the families of industrial workers increased by 2.5 per cent over the past four years (1960-1963). Taking into account the hidden rise in prices--which the official statistics do not--we must suppose that the living standards of the majority of working-class families have not risen in these four years and have even declined somewhat.

Nevertheless, the total value of industrial production in 1963 was almost nine times that of 1938 (and 1948), and the national income grew more than two-and-a-half times between 1949 and 1963. The increase in per capita consumption was obviously higher in the years 1949-1960 than the modest increase in real wages. This was due to the increase in the volume of employment. This is simply a consequence of industrialization, whatever the system. The rate of exploitation does not depend on the volume of employment but only on the ratio between the value of the product created and total wages, the payment to productive labor. The increase of the national product per worker was incomparably more rapid than the modest increase in his real wages (obtained, for the most part, during a few exceptional years in the regime's history). In 1960-62 net industrial production increased by 20 per cent and wages by less than 5 per cent and, at the same time, prices of food products according to official statistics rose by 3.4 per cent in state trading, 7 per cent in grocery stores, and 12 per cent on the free market. The standard of living of working-class families thus has not risen at all.

Polish nutrition experts have defined four types of diet. Diet A (barely adequate and improper over a prolonged period) includes an average of 37 kilograms of meat per year per person. Diet B (adequate and permitting normal and steady functioning of the organism) includes 40 kg. of meat per year per person. According to the GUS analysis of household budgets of working-class families, 23 per cent eat less meat than specified in Diet A, and 19 per cent eat exactly that amount but still less than that specified in Diet B.

The lack of vegetables, fruits, fish, butter and eggs in the diets of working-class families is even more distressing.

A survey of the living standards of workers at the Warsaw Motorcycle Factory in 1957 showed that 23 per cent of the workers' families ate meat for dinner once a week at most, and 25 per cent twice a week. One might suppose that seven-year-old data are outmoded; but the average yearly per capita consumption of meat was 43.9 kg. in 1957, higher than in 1960 (42.5 kg.) and not much less than in 1963 (45.4 kg.).

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\*Główny Urząd Statystyki, the State Statistical Bureau.

Besides food, basic needs include clothing, housing, elementary comforts and household equipment. In 1957, each worker of the above-named factory had 0.51 wool suit, 1.05 suits made of cloth containing a small proportion of wool, 0.8 pair of wool trousers, and 0.6 wool jacket. In the lowest income group (18 per cent of the families questioned), there was one wool suit for every five workers. As for winter clothing, the average per person was 0.15 wool overcoat, 0.12 overcoat containing a small percentage of wool, 0.2 wool top coat and 0.5 top coat made of cloth containing a small percentage of wool.

One might suppose that the situation has since improved. But, according to official data, average real wages rose by about 12 per cent between 1958 and 1963--and the increase in workers' real wages has undoubtedly been less than the over-all average. (In the years 1960-1963 average real income of families of all employees in the industrial sector rose by 4.5 per cent, while those of workers' families rose by 2.5 per cent.)

Ten per cent of workers' families in the Warsaw Motorcycle Factory had less than 3 square meters of living space per person; 19 per cent, from 3 to 4 sq. meters; 10 per cent, from 4 to 5 sq. meters; 13 per cent, from 5 to 6 sq. meters. Thus 52 per cent had less than 6 sq. meters per person.

One per cent of the families questioned had hot running water, 46 per cent had cold running water. Twenty-five per cent had a toilet; 7 per cent, a bathroom. Each family had an average of 0.3 beds per person. Sixty-five per cent of the workers questioned suffered from chronic ailments.

According to the GUS data on workers' family budgets, up to the third income group (600-800 zlotys per month per person) wage increases go first of all into increased consumption of beef, pork, milk, milk products, eggs, and other food products, such as sugar. It is only above the third category that expenditures for such items increase less than the income of the family, and expenditures for clothing, culture, education and recreation increase more. This means that at the third level the needs which workers' families consider basic are met. Twenty-two to twenty-three per cent of working-class families fall below the basic minimum, a percentage roughly equal to the number of families whose meat consumption is less than adequate.

The minimum subsistence level of people living in society is not constant. It is socially and historically conditioned and in general rises with the growth of industry, technology, and the educational level of the given society. Modern industrial development requires workers of an ever higher professional and educational standard who, therefore, have ever greater cultural and material needs.

Today the minimum living wage of workers in Poland is certainly higher than in 1937. The same phenomenon has occurred in capitalist society. In the majority of the Western countries, the real income of workers has unquestionably increased by at least 45 per cent in the last twenty-five or thirty years, but wages are still what they were a quarter of a century ago--the current equivalent of basic living costs, that is, the price of labor power.

As is evident in the GUS analysis of family budgets, the different consumption levels of working-class families do not result from wage differen-

tials, but, above all, from the size of the family and the number of wage earners in it. This means that the average wage in this country is so low that the living standard of one-quarter of working-class families falls below the necessary minimum because they have too many mouths to feed. And 13 per cent just maintain themselves at that level. Most families above the necessary minimum level are childless couples or couples (if both parents work) with one or two children at most.

This means that wage levels in our country coincide with the current necessary minimum living standard. The workers' share in the national income does not exceed that necessary for them to live and raise their children and thus to reproduce their labor power and prepare new workers for industry.

Wages therefore are only a component of production costs, as indispensable as expenditures for raw materials and machinery.

Most workers live in state-owned dwellings, for which they pay only a nominal rent, and thus receive their lodging in large part free. But they must live somewhere in order to live and produce. Their homes are by no means luxurious and often lack the most elementary comforts. This housing is one of the components of the necessary minimum living standard, furnished as a wage-supplement.

The workers also receive free medical care and discounts on medicines. But they must be given medical care to maintain their fitness for work. Free medical care and low-cost medicines are also parts of the necessary minimum living standard. If free medical care were abolished, and if the charges for housing and its maintenance were brought up to a level profitable for the construction industry and building maintenance services, wages would have to rise accordingly. These free services are a necessary part of the workers' living standard, a complement to their wages as essential as wages themselves; they are a part then of production costs. These services and subsidies are of a supplementary character since total per capita social consumption in Poland comes to only 1,200 zlotys per year.

What part of the product of their labor is included in workers' wages? The official statistics give a false picture for two reasons:

- 1) The prices assigned to products in Sector A (production of the means of production) are not the real prices but are undervalued by comparison with those of Sector B (production of consumer goods), which artificially inflates the proportion of wages in production costs.
- 2) The artificial lowering of the prices of agricultural products falsely understates the contribution of agriculture to the national income and exaggerates that of industry.

However, we are forced to utilize official statistics in our document, and so we regard the results as only an approximate picture of the reality.

In 1962, each industrial worker created on the average a product with a net value of 71,000 zlotys, from which he received an average of 22,000 zlotys in the form of wages. In other words, during a third of the workday the workers produce their own necessary minimum living wage and during the

other two-thirds they create surplus product.

The working class has no control over the size of this surplus product, or over the way it is apportioned, or the uses to which it is put; for, as we have already seen, it has no say in the decisions of the authorities who control the means of production and production itself. It is not the workers who decide on the wage rate; this is handed down to them from above along with production quotas. Workers have neither the right nor opportunity to defend themselves economically; for, as we have seen, they have been deprived of organization, the absolute prerequisite for any effective strike action. Any organizing agreement among workers to fight for higher wages is illegal and, as such, is prosecuted by the apparatus of repression: the police, the judges, the courts. The surplus product is thus taken from the workers by force in proportions not of their choosing and used in ways they cannot control.

Where does this surplus product go?

To investment, in the first place, and thus to the expansion of production. But since the worker produces for himself only the necessary minimum living standard, the goal of production is not his class goal. (Similarly, under capitalism investment may serve the worker's interest to the extent that it may afford him employment in another factory thus allowing him to earn his living; but the goal of production does not thereby become his goal.) In the present system, the sums devoted to capital investment are used for purposes foreign to the workers.

The surplus product is used in the second place to support the apparatus of repression: the army, the political police, the prosecutors, the prisons. This apparatus serves to strengthen the existing economic and social relations in which workers receive only their minimum living wage and yield two-thirds of their product, while being deprived of any say about or control over their labor and its product and deprived of the organizational means of economic self-defense. The sums allotted to the party and the organizations under its control are used for the same end--to block all attempts at resistance and opposition on the part of the workers and to organize them in obedience to the state. In this category are: payments to overseers, who watch over the workers to insure that they create the largest possible surplus product and get not one zloty more than their wages; the expenses of the propaganda apparatus, which glorifies the prevailing system and explains to the workers that everything is for the best; expenditures for the administrative organs which are the instruments of bureaucratic rule. All these bodies are enemies of the workers, and the share of the social product which goes to them is turned against the workers in the form of police, supervisors, and the party organization.

Thirdly, the surplus product pays the costs of sectors whose functions do not appear to be bound to the system (science, public education, higher learning, culture, health, and other services). These sectors unquestionably have a social function. But culture, education, science, and the production of material goods itself also have such a function in any society where class antagonisms exist, and do not thereby lose their class character. The types of expenditures referred to in this paragraph can be classed as follows:

1) Those expenditures which directly serve production (part of the funds allocated to science -- for example, technical and mathematical studies, part of the funds for education at all levels -- training of the work force, etc.). In the existing economic relationships, the goal of production and, therefore, the sums expended to attain it are, in the same way as investment, alien to the worker's class interests.

2) Those expenditures serving indirectly to justify the existing social relationships, to root them in the consciousness of the masses, and to establish forms of collective life in harmony with them. Part of the money spent on science, literature, the cinema, and the arts falls primarily under this heading. The submission to the interests of the bureaucracy by creative intellectuals, whose profession is closely linked to the development of social consciousness, is facilitated by their material dependence on scientific authorities, ministry officials, and the editors of state publishing enterprises, backed by a political argument (the leading role of the party in science and culture) and a repressive argument, censorship. Writers, scientists, and film directors can manifest independence in their work or offer anything to the public only to the extent the censors permit. By means of its censorship, its power to appoint people to responsible positions, and its control of publishing houses and cultural institutions, the bureaucracy demarcates the professional boundaries within which creative intellectuals are permitted to work, and thus it forces them either into silence or becoming apologists for the regime.

The sums allocated to education also in part serve similar objectives --not because of the propagandistic character of instruction in the schools, but rather because the hidebound educational methods in today's schools fit young people into the mold of the existing social relationships in which the workers do not control their labor and its product and are deprived of political rights. Thus the schools are directed toward ends opposed to the interests of the workers.

3) The funds allotted for various benefits and free social services for workers and wage-earners in general: the bulk of the funds allocated to public health, a part of those devoted to community facilities, nurseries and nursery schools, recreation, etc. As we have seen, these free services are an indispensable component of the workers' necessary living standard, given the level of real wages. From the point of view of those who organize production, therefore, they are a part of production costs and belong to the necessary product and not to the surplus product.

Obviously, it is impossible for the workers to get the full equivalent of their product in the form of real wages. For production to develop, a part must be set aside for capital investment, and another part to support the non-productive sectors which are essential to the welfare of the workers and society as a whole (education, public health, science, etc.). But under the prevailing system, the workers get only their necessary living expenses in wages and services. Their surplus product is taken from them by force (they have no control over the amount or how it is allocated) and used for ends which are alien and even inimical to them. Therefore they are exploited-- they receive only enough of their product to cover their minimum needs and find the entire power of the state arrayed against them; the product of their own labor confronts them as an alien or hostile force and thus does not belong to them.

If the product which the workers create does not belong to them, the source of this product, their labor-power, does not belong to them either.

Why is this so?

The workers must produce to live. For the process of production to take place, there must be an association of labor-power with the means of production. The association of the worker's labor-power with another's means of production can be brought about only through a meeting on the labor market of the workers who own their labor-power and the owners of the means of production. Thus the workers are exploited because they are deprived of the ownership of the means of production--they must sell their labor-power to live. From the moment they perform this act which they must do, that is, when they have sold their capacity to do a given job in a given time, that labor and the product created by it no longer belong to them but to those who have bought their labor-power, namely, the owners of the means of production, the exploiters.

To whom do the workers sell their labor-power in our country? To those who hold the means of production in their hands, the central political bureaucracy. By virtue of that, the central political bureaucracy is a ruling class--it has exclusive control over the basic means of production; it buys the labor-power of the workers; it takes their surplus product from them by naked force and economic coercion and uses it for purposes alien or hostile to the workers, namely, to reinforce and extend its own control over production and society. In our system this is the dominant form of property relations, the basis of productive and social relationships.

It is said that the bureaucracy cannot be a class because the personal incomes of its members are insignificant in comparison with those of the capitalists--the individual bureaucrat at most has a villa, an automobile, and a secretary--because entry into the ranks of the bureaucracy is accomplished through a political career and not through family inheritance and one can quite easily be expelled from the bureaucracy as a result of political infighting. This is a misunderstanding, however. All these arguments tend to prove only one obvious fact--bureaucratic ownership is not of an individual nature but is the collective ownership by an elite identifying itself with the state. This determines the bureaucracy's internal organizational principles; however, its class character does not depend on the way it is organized or on its customs, but only on its relations--as a group--to the means of production and to the other social classes (above all, the working class).

The individual incomes of the capitalists are vastly greater than those of the bureaucrats; but from the personal incomes of the capitalists are drawn the funds for investment, the wages of overseers, hired labor, service personnel, and all those who serve to increase the capitalists' power and influence. Their personal incomes permit the capitalists to acquire prestige, standing, influence, and political power. The incomes of the bureaucrats cover only their personal consumption. All the rest--capital investment, the wages of the host who guard their power, propagandists, supervisors, etc.--is drawn from the state revenues which they alone control. Due to their small numbers, the bureaucrats consume only a tiny part of the social product in the form of luxuries; but this is equally true of the capitalists, who likewise consume only a small part of the social product. This is not the essence of



exploitation. Direct personal consumption is not the goal of the ruling class in any system.

Consumption privileges, prestige, power, and all the existing privileges in society derive from control over production. Hence every ruling class seeks to maintain, reinforce, and extend its hold over production and over society. It uses the surplus product to achieve these ends and it subordinates the process of production itself to this goal.

## Chapter III

### THE CLASS GOAL OF PRODUCTION

Every ruling class sets the goal of social production. It does so obviously in its own class interest, with the intent of tightening and extending its hold on production and society.

The position of individual capitalists (corporations, monopolies, etc.) in society depends on the size of their capital, just as international position of the entire capitalist class of any given country depends on the amount of the national capital. For capital is the modern form of domination over labor and the product of labor. Hence the constant preoccupation of capitalists is to accumulate capital and increase it; in fact, they are the expression of their capital and its expansionist tendency.

The capitalists find all the elements essential to production on the market--machines, raw materials and labor-power. They must realize on the market the value of the commodities produced. Therefore, the object of production for them is not the surplus product in its physical form but the greatest possible profit, i. e., the greatest possible difference between production costs (expenses for machines, raw materials and labor-power) and market prices.

There is a contradiction between the expansion of capital, productive apparatus, production itself and the workers' low level of consumption set by the low level of the minimum standard of living. This contradiction derives from the production process itself (paying the workers the least possible wage and extracting from them the greatest possible production). It appears on the market as the growing disparity between capital and the social product, which constantly increases, and the low effective demand (purchasing power) of the masses. In competitive capitalism, this is periodically resolved by cyclical crises. In modern capitalism, by variations in the economic conjuncture: recessions, a declining rate of growth, under-utilization of productive capacity, arms production and government spending, which up to a certain point, make production independent of the market; finally, by the increased consumption of the so-called middle class and of the workers organized in parties and trade unions which fight for increased wages and social benefits.

If the statistics indicate that the participation of capital and labor in the distribution of national income is apparently constant for extended periods, this still does not prove that the goal of production has changed. The goal is still maximum profits while increased consumption by the workers is regarded as a necessary evil with political and economic causes.

In our system, there is no private capital. The factories, mines, mills and all their products are state property. But since the state is in the hands of the central political bureaucracy, which collectively controls the means of production and exploits the workers, the means of production and maintenance in their entirety have been transformed into a single centralized national "cap-

ital." The material power of the bureaucracy, the extent of its domination over the productive process, its international position (extremely important to a class organized as a group embodying the state), depend on the size of the national capital. The bureaucracy thus seeks to increase it, to expand the productive apparatus and investment. The bureaucracy is the expression of the national capital, of its tendency to expansion, just as a capitalist is of his individual capital.

What class goal of the bureaucracy is attained through production, i.e., what is the class goal of production? It is not the profits of the individual enterprises, but the aggregate national surplus product, which supplies the funds for investment as well as all the resources devoted to the maintenance and reinforcement of bureaucratic class rule.

Unlike the capitalists, the bureaucracy has no need to realize the surplus product on the market, nor that part of the total product which corresponds to depreciation of constant capital. It owns all the plants and the products they produce; it has no need to buy from itself. If the journey of steel from the foundry to the mill, or of coal from the mine to the foundry, is entered in the ledgers as purchase of means of production, in reality, it is simply a form of transfer of products within the same concern and not a real act of buying and selling. The arbitrary character of prices in the state economy is proof of this--prices are only an accounting tool for products; they need not correspond to their value relationships.

The only means of production which the bureaucracy does not own is labor-power; the bureaucracy buys it wholesale under monopoly conditions (behind every enterprise is the same owner, therefore the workers always "choose" the same buyer who does not permit them to organize to defend their economic interests). Nonetheless it buys manpower on the market in a real act of buying and selling; and it must pay the workers. With what? With money of course. However, as we have seen money does not have the same meaning for the bureaucracy as it does for the capitalists since it is simply a tool of control in allocating the social product at its disposal. The wage rates reflect simply the amount of the means of subsistence at the disposal of the bureaucracy and which it grants the workers as the equivalent of their labor-power.

In reality, then, the bureaucracy buys manpower with a given amount of the means of subsistence (necessary for the daily life of families), that is, part of the production of consumers' goods, construction of housing, hospitals, nurseries and also food.

Since most land is individually owned, agricultural products do not belong to the bureaucracy and it must buy them from the peasant producers on the market. In this case, we are again confronted with a monopolized market in which the bureaucracy fixes the prices of agricultural produce at a disadvantageously low level in comparison to industrial goods. Nonetheless, there is a market relationship, and the peasants must be paid. With what? Again, with manufactured consumers' goods as well as farm machinery and fertilizer. The produce purchased from the peasants is a component of the workers' necessary living standard; therefore, the price paid to the peasants enters into the cost of purchasing manpower for industry, just as do those of construction, transport and the nonproductive urban sectors.

The price of labor-power is therefore bound up with production of con-

sumers' goods, construction of housing, nurseries, hospitals, etc. and production of farm machinery and fertilizer. By and large, these comprise what is called Sector B. As we have already seen, labor-power is the only element of the productive process which is not owned by the bureaucracy. The payment for labor-power--that is, the production of Sector B--is from the bureaucracy's viewpoint the only expense it has to incur for production to take place and create the surplus product. In striving for the greatest possible surplus product, the bureaucracy keeps this expense at the lowest possible level. For it, as a class, production for consumption is a necessary evil and production for production is the goal.

Production, as a process taking place between man and nature--a biological-technical process which exists in all societies--cannot be an end in itself. It is always production for consumption; because it is conscious activity motivated by human need, and consumption of the goods produced reproduces the need. The private, subjective aim of the ruling class (the class goal of production) may contradict the social aim of production. This occurs in the capitalist system as well as in the bureaucratic one in accordance with the inherent tendency of all ruling classes to promote the growth of production while restricting distribution, and hence consumption, according to class lines. In both systems, this contradiction ultimately imposes restrictions on production itself, but in different ways.

To gain their ends, to obtain the maximum profit and guarantee capital accumulation, the capitalists must realize value produced on the market. They care little what they produce as long as the market absorbs their products. These products must be bought and therefore they are directed toward the consumers in the last analysis. Hence effective demand, set by the level of social consumption, determines possibilities of sale on the market and at the same time limits capitalist production and capital accumulation through periodic crises and other types of conversion difficulties.

In the chapter dealing with the economic crisis of the bureaucratic system--which we will discuss in detail later on--we explain how production in the bureaucratic system is limited by the low level of social consumption. However, the market mechanism does not cause this. For the class goal of the bureaucracy is not profit and capital accumulation, but rather surplus product in its physical form and the expansion of production, i.e., production for production. In general, only labor-power and the means of maintaining it enter the market. The surplus product does not enter the market nor does the part of production which goes into the reproduction and expansion of constant capital (machinery, raw materials, fuels). The market does not regulate the productive process, hence the impossibility of cyclical crises caused by variations in business conditions and of the restriction of production by market-realization difficulties. Thus the rate of growth and investment can be maintained at a very high level over a long period while consumption is kept at a low level.

The contradiction between the class goal of production and the needs of consumption in this system emerges in the planning stage even before the initiation of the productive process. Typically, the plans set the rate of investment as high as possible and consequently the share of consumption in the national income as low as possible. Much more rapid growth is projected in Sector A (means of production) therefore than in Sector B (consumer goods). The

disproportion increases as the plan is implemented; the investment program usually runs into difficulty and the state planners typically try to save the situation at the expense of the consumers.

In the last analysis, then, the share of investment in the plan is usually larger than originally provided for, and that of consumption less. Accordingly, the growth in Sector A is usually more than the planned amount, and that in Sector B, less.

It will be readily understood that despite this, growth of the national income is normally accompanied by growth of consumption. This is the result of the increased demand for labor and (to a lesser degree) of the rise in the minimum standard of living. In certain periods the share of consumption in the national income may remain constant and even increase (especially in the event of a direct political threat from the workers). This does not mean that the class goal of production has changed--the bureaucracy considers increased consumption a necessary evil, its interest is still in the surplus product.

As all economic laws, production for production and increase of investment exists in the form of a tendency and not as an absolute rule. This tendency, moreover, is easily recognized over the long run. In 1949, which is a logical starting point for a number of reasons (it marks the end of the period of reconstruction and the definitive establishment of economic, social and political relationships in a system of bureaucratic dictatorship), the share of consumption in the national income was 85 per cent, and that of investment 15 per cent. In 1963, the share of consumption was 74.6 per cent, and that of investment, 25.4 per cent.

Apparently this tendency was not realized in a uniform manner. In 1950, investment suddenly jumped from 15 to 20 per cent and continued to grow slowly until 1954 (22.4 per cent); 1953 was an exceptional year however and investment reached the unprecedented height of 27.1 per cent of the national income. In 1956-1957, the share of investment decreased (19.7 per cent in 1956, and 21.7 per cent in 1957). Thereafter, the relative proportions of investment and consumption remained nearly constant until 1959. In 1960 investment took a new leap from 21.9 per cent to 24.2 per cent. The upward tendency continued in the ensuing years.

In 1961-1963, according to official data, consumption increased only 15 per cent (individual consumption by only 12 per cent), while investment increased 23 per cent.

Apart from individual consumption, total consumption includes what official statistics term "residual consumption," i. e., all material expenditures in the nonproductive sectors--the army, police, nurseries and nursery schools, etc. The share of consumption by individuals in the national income was 77.8 per cent in 1949, and 66.1 per cent in 1963. The latter is the lowest figure for this category in the entire twenty-year postwar period, for even in 1953 this figure was 66.9 per cent.

Moreover we must remember that, in our country, prices in the means of production sector have an arbitrary character since they are calculated in relation to the prices of articles whose consumption is on a low level. However, the investment aggregate is calculated in terms of prices in the means

of production sector. The result is an arbitrary understatement of its share in the national income and a corresponding overstatement of the share of consumption. Taking 1949 as the base (100) for both investment and consumption, in 1963 the investment index had increased to 361 and consumption to 215.

The slowing down of the rate of investment in 1956-59 coincided with the political crisis, the relative weakening of the regime and the workers' struggle for higher wages.

Apart from this exceptional period, we note that since 1949 the growth of the share of investment in the national income and the decline in the share of consumption have continued almost without interruption. This tendency will continue in 1966-1970 due to a very extensive investment program. Thus we see that the "production-for-production" tendency is not a fable but tangible reality.

In our remarks on the class goal of production, we totally passed over the personal consumption of the bureaucrats. The central political bureaucracy is so small that the share of the social product consumed by it may be regarded as insignificant. In actuality the amount consumed by them is independent of the level of total production and therefore has no bearing on the purpose of production.

However, the bureaucracy uses the surplus product to maintain a vast army of civil servants, supervisory personnel, policemen, etc., who maintain and reinforce the social and productive relations on which bureaucratic rule is based. This great host, which includes privileged groups with a high level of consumption, absorbs an important part of the national income. Without question, the most important of these privileged groups is the technocrats since their functions are closely linked to the productive process. Is not, then, the satisfaction of the consumption needs of the privileged layers, the plant managers above all, also a purpose of production? If this were so, it would mean that the bureaucracy is not an authentic ruling class but only the representative of the interests of privileged social strata, just as the leading political figures in the capitalist countries are the political representatives of the monopolist big bourgeoisie.

However, in the capitalist countries this results from the fact that capital, ownership, domination of labor and its product, class rule in brief, are concentrated in the hands of the monopolies and not in those of the political elite. In the new system of domination over labor and its product, national capital, ownership, are concentrated solely in the hands of the central political bureaucracy--it alone dominates production and society. The technocracy has no power, no part in decision-making; its only role is to execute the orders of the bureaucracy and to supervise the exploitation of the workers. That is what it is paid for. The bureaucracy is even inclined to pay well, to grant the managers the privilege of a high level of consumption in order to attach them more securely to its system. It does this, however, in its own interests alone. It does not represent the technocrats--it buys them.

The workers resent the high life led by the plant managers since it is paid for out of the surplus product they create. From the economic standpoint, these costs come under the heading of nonproductive expenditures, since they go to support a given class organization of the productive process and not

the material productive process itself. The bureaucracy considers the form of productive organization on which its power is based as the only possible way of organizing the material process of production and therefore does not differentiate between productive and nonproductive expenditures.

In the context of class rule and the prevailing social relationships, the police, the propagandists and the overseers are as essential to insure the production of material goods as the producers themselves. From the point of view of the ruling class, therefore, the high salaries of the management layer are an indispensable element of production costs--not the aim of production. As long as social and political conditions permitted--until 1956--the bureaucracy kept the salaries and income of the supervisory stratum at a relatively low level, far below that of the prewar period and considerably lower than now. The salaries of the broad mass of low-ranking civil servants are still no higher than the workers' subsistence wages, despite the fact that they are the servants of the system. For if they can serve it for 1,600 zlotys a month, there is no reason to pay them more.

Thus we see that for the bureaucracy the consumption on the part of the managerial and other privileged strata, as well as that of the workers and the mass of poorly paid government clerks, is a necessary evil and production alone remains the goal. The technocrats help realize the class goal of production, but their role is that of hired overseers. Their own interest (the kind of production which would assure a rich life for the privileged groups in society) by no means corresponds to the aims of the bureaucracy--to the contrary, it is alien and contrary to its aims. To the degree that they were freed from control and had the opportunity to act on their own, the technocrats would try to achieve their own aims, which are antagonistic to the production goal set by the ruling class.

This fact is very important for an understanding of the mechanism of economic control in the bureaucratic system, since all management functions are no more than the means of organizing production for a well-defined end. Also, in a class society, all managerial relationships are determined by the class goal of production.

This goal is realized in the course of the process of production by the workers and those who supervise them, the technocrats. We have already seen that both these groups are primarily interested in consumption, though it does not have the same social and material character for each. The prevailing class aim of production is therefore in contradiction with the workers' and the technocrats' own aims. It must then be carried out against their natural inclination. From this, it follows that the system of management must be designed in a way capable of forcing the workers and factory directors to achieve the goals set by the bureaucracy.

Therefore, it is necessary to reduce to the minimum any opportunities for the workers and managers to make their own decisions. Thus managers have no right to make decisions regarding the most basic problems of the plants they run. They carry out the orders of the central authority and supervise the workers on its behalf. In turn they try to deprive the workers of all leeway to make their own decisions on the job in order to make it easier to force them to serve productive aims alien to them. All aspects of plant management--the decisions concerning the kind of product and the amount to be

produced, the methods to be used, the choice of raw materials and the production costs of each plant--belong exclusively to the central authority. They are transmitted to the plants in the form of absolutely obligatory administrative directives, "quotas." This is what constitutes the centralized system of management. It is obvious that it is the expression of the prevailing mode of production.

Today's economic crisis is often attributed to poor functioning of the centralized system of management. Sweeping reforms are demanded to bring the system to a higher degree of perfection. The first assumption is false because it mistakes the symptoms for the cause. Moreover, the conclusion, the idea that it is possible in the context of the existing mode of production to change the system of management as one chooses, is clearly utopian. Let us examine the question whether replacing centralized management with "decentralized management," is consistent with the type of production relationships which prevail in our country.

In the decentralized systems, the individual plants are autonomous; the production decisions are made at the plant level. It is not the "level" that makes these decisions, but men, i. e. the social groups in whose hands plant management exclusively rests. Thus, the self-governing plants can be run by one of the two basic groups brought together by the organization of production--the workers or the plant management. Regarding the plants from an overall viewpoint, we see that in a decentralized system economic control can belong either to the workers or to the technocrats.

Workers' democracy cannot, by the nature of things, limit itself to the plant level. If the workers do not have the power to make the major national decisions, that is, to exercise real control over surplus value and the labor that created it, the participation of the workers in plant management necessarily becomes a fiction. Workers' management of the plants therefore requires full workers' democracy in the state. Only under such conditions will the organized working class be able to establish goals of social production in harmony with its own interests--with the interests of those who today have nothing but their subsistence living standard. Obviously, the new goal of production will be mass consumption. In short, this means the overthrow of the existing productive and social relationships and of bureaucratic class rule along with them.

The situation would be entirely different, if all power of decision in the self-governing factories belonged to the plant managements and the groups allied with them--the technocrats. Such a situation could certainly exist behind the facade of formal self-management as long as the system of a single party with a monopoly of power was continued (such a party inevitably becomes an instrument of dictatorship over the working class) along with the old apparatus of repression--the police and the army (the political police and the regular army are instruments of anti-popular dictatorship by their very nature). This sort of system, which exists in Yugoslavia today, has nothing in common with workers' democracy. The workers there have no say in determining the size of the surplus product, the way it is allocated, or the uses to which it is put; and their consumption is kept at the level of the necessary minimum. They are exploited and the social goal of production is not theirs. But this does not mean that the production goal there is the same as in the bureaucratic system.



In the so-called decentralized system, the individual plants decide only on production. The central plan is implemented not by means of administrative quotas but by the manipulation of the economic power of the central government, which decides on key investments, amortization funds, credit and the interest rate and--in the last analysis--market prices.

Unlike the way it is in the centralized system, plants cannot be judged on the basis of their achievement of coefficients set at the "top." The only criterion for judging the plants' economic performance is their profitability, i. e., by the profits realized from the sale of their products. This means that the volume, price, form and quality of production must be adjusted to demand so that value of the goods created is entirely realized on the market. Production is therefore effectively directed toward the buyer and, in the final analysis, toward the consumer.

Since not only consumers' goods and labor-power are sold on the market but also the means of production, the market regulates production. Consequently production must adapt itself to those consumer needs which are expressed by market demand. The state can influence the market through its economic policies, but it cannot free the state enterprises from the market mechanism and therefore cannot deprive the consumers of their influence on production. The consumers, however, influence production only to the degree that their needs take the form of effective demand--that is, to the extent of their purchasing power. Therefore, the way in which the national income is shared exercises a primary influence on the structure of production. The distribution of the national income, and therefore the structure of production, clearly will be different under workers' democracy than under the technocratic system. In both cases, however, market demand will represent the needs of a certain type of consumption.

Thus, the particular class goal of the bureaucracy, production for production's sake, cannot be realized in the technocratic system either for the following reasons:

a) Production is dependent on the market and is therefore much more directly limited by the volume and structure of consumption than in the centralized system.

b) Since the technocrats control the factories, they influence the primary distribution of profits and increase inequalities in distribution as much as possible. The technocracy is a relatively large group in society and (like the other privileged strata) it devotes its high income completely to consumption. It thereby creates a large effective demand for prestige and luxury products and corresponding types of services, and this obviously has an influence on production.

c) The transformation of the technocrats from mere executors of administrative dicta and overseers of wage-labor into the possessors of the real power at the plant level simultaneously magnifies their rank and importance in the state. By virtue of their function in society, they form an organized layer which is organized specifically to supervise the productive process; therefore they must be taken into account when "central" decisions are made. Thus, the managerial layer wins the opportunity to influence broad economic decisions which, in the centralized system, are monopolized by the central

political bureaucracy. With production conditions regulated by the needs of the market and the economic activities of the state, the technocrats' control over the allocation of reserves and broad economic decisions would create a tendency toward a production aimed at satisfying the high standard of living of the privileged strata. (It is characteristic that the rush to investment that we see in Yugoslavia today is primarily in the consumer-goods industry.)

Thus, the so-called decentralized system cannot in any way serve as a means of realizing the class aim of production proper to the rule of the central political bureaucracy. Even with the workers still deprived of control over their labor and the product of it--therefore still exploited, and with the management of the factories in the hands of the technocrats, the decentralized system of management would serve a different productive end. This would bring about a change in the composition and character of the ruling class--other production relationships. It follows, therefore, that far-reaching changes in the system of management are impossible without a change in the production relationships. (We have already seen that the converse is equally true.) In fact, those harmful features of our system whose origin is habitually sought in wrong indices and material stimulants, etc., in reality derive from the production relations--from the structure of the economic system itself, and not from its poor "functioning."

It is clear that the production relationships (above all the class goal of production), and not the system of management by itself, determine whether the economic system promotes the development of the country or holds it back. These, then, determine the life expectancy of the prevailing social relationships and the bureaucratic class rule based on them.

## Chapter IV

### THE ORIGIN OF THE SYSTEM

According to a widely held opinion, the present regime and its first leaders, brought into the country by the Red Army, had no economic and social base and were only able to establish themselves in a situation where real national sovereignty was lacking. Thus, the causes of the formation of the bureaucratic system are put outside Polish boundaries and the causes of what happens outside Poland holds little interest for the proponents of this view. They are interested in the effects only, in the present state of things interpreted as the "raison d'état" of Poland. The nationalist ideology, thus despite appearances, helps to solidify the social relationships on which the rule of the bureaucracy is based.

We do not dispute the role played by external circumstances in the abolition of capitalism in our country: the weakness of authentic independent revolutionary elements, the decisive role of the Red Army, our government's very great dependence on the Soviet bureaucracy--long since elevated into a ruling class--the situation in the international workers' movement.

All this, of course, effectively accelerated the process of bureaucratization. However, we believe that this process was objectively conditioned by the country's level of economic development and by its economic and social structure; this holds true for Czarist Russia as well as for the Poland of the interwar period, and for the great majority of countries in our camp. This process was conditioned as well by the relative international isolation of these countries (since the large industrial powers remained capitalist). When capitalism was abolished in these countries, they were backward, with meager industry and a great unused surplus of manpower evidencing itself in unemployment and, most of all, rural overpopulation. Their economies were, in one way or another, under the domination of the capitalists of the advanced imperialist nations.

In such countries, only industrialization could bring real improvement in the material, social and cultural conditions of life of the rural and urban masses and insure progress for society as a whole. Industrialization, therefore, is in the interests of the entire society and constitutes the principal task of the new governments which abolished capitalism in the interests of the workers and ruled in their name.

With industrial capacity low, the economic surplus (the difference between production and current total consumption, that is, the basis of accumulation) was also low. Aid from the developed capitalist countries could not be expected. To the contrary, the mechanism of the world market makes the underdeveloped countries exporters of food and raw materials and brings their economies under the domination of the capital of the imperialist powers which control the world market, thus holding back industrialization and perpetuating underdevelopment. Independence from the mechanism of the international cap-

italist market was therefore essential to development. Industrialization had to be accomplished rapidly or not at all.

Enormous reserves of unemployed manpower were the basis for development. Therefore industrialization was of necessity carried out through employment of these reserves and by the rapid construction of new productive forces. (This is what is called the extensive method of economic development.) Furthermore, the increase in employment could not be accompanied by a rapid increase in consumption because this would entail a diminution of the already meager economic surplus, making impossible rapid development of the productive apparatus and employment of still unused manpower, thus putting a brake on industrialization. The maximum increase in employment and production had to be brought about while keeping consumption at the lowest possible level. The aim was the maximum economic surplus--thus production for production's sake. This aim expressed the needs of industrializing the country as long as the construction of the industrial base was incomplete; therefore, for a certain time, production for production's sake corresponded to the demands of economic development and to the interests of society as a whole.

In the course of industrialization there was a massive influx of unemployed manpower from the countryside into the industries being built, an increase in the size of the working class, the higher technical cadres, the intellectuals, and an explosion in the number of technocrats. At the same time the need to restrict consumption forced a significant cut, in comparison to pre-war standards, in the salaries of the technocrats, intellectuals and office workers; similarly the restriction of workers' wages to a very low level, was regarded by the older workers as a wage cut; finally, a policy tending forcibly to deprive the peasants of agricultural surpluses beyond the basic needs of their families and their farms.

Thus, industrialization, although it represented the interest of the society as a whole, did not correspond to any of the various interests of any class or social group considered separately. The natural aspiration of each group in society, of the peasants as peasants, of the workers as workers, of the plant managers as plant managers--and not as individuals who had lately improved their financial and social circumstances or had reasonable hope of so doing--was the greatest possible increase in their individual incomes, and the improvement of the material and social position of their own group--hence, in any event, a tendency to maximum consumption.

On the contrary, however, the needs of industrialization required production for the sake of production. Industrialization was a raison d'être, a primary goal of the new state. It pursued this end despite the specific interests of the other classes and social strata, indeed to a certain extent, against them. Against the peasants, forcibly deprived of their agricultural surplus and constantly threatened with expropriation en masse; against the workers, whose wages were kept at the lowest possible level--and even lower; against the intellectuals and the technocrats. The achievement of such industrialization required that they be deprived of any opportunity of expressing their special interests and of struggling to defend or fulfill them.

Concentrating all political decisions, as well as control over the means of production and the collective product, in the hands of the new state required

that production be freed from regulation by the market, and that the opportunities for the workers, technocrats or peasants to act on their own initiative be as strictly limited as possible. The "one-party" system was introduced to meet these requirements. All other groups in society were prevented from having their own parties--first and foremost, the working class--by placing all organizations under state tutelage, by reinforcing the apparatus of constraint against the producers, by concentrating all news and propaganda media exclusively in the hands of an all-powerful elite, by eliminating the freedom of artists and intellectuals to create, and by establishing a centralized system of economic management. All this was accompanied by massive police terror.

The elite, in thus concentrating in its hands alone social and political power, as well as power over the productive process and the division of the product created (i. e., ownership), made industrialization its class interest and, in a sense, its personal interest. It made "production for production's sake" its class goal and the basis for consolidating and extending its rule.

This elite was thus transformed into a new ruling class, "the central political bureaucracy," and the state it ruled into a bureaucratic class dictatorship. It can be said, therefore, that the needs of industrializing an underdeveloped country gave birth to the bureaucracy as a ruling class; it alone could answer these needs since, in the conditions of the country's underdevelopment, it alone adopted industrialization--production for production's sake--as its class interest.

Under these conditions, the productive relations based on bureaucratic ownership assured rapid economic development and, thanks to this, possibilities of progress and a better life opened up for the other classes and social strata--perspectives for improvement within the framework of the bureaucratic system itself.

Industrialization opened the way to a better life for the broad masses of the underdeveloped country via the passage of vast numbers of people from the materially, socially, and culturally most disadvantaged classes to the higher classes and strata: from the peasantry to the working class, from the peasantry and the working class, thanks to the expansion of education at all levels, to the ranks of the technical cadres, office workers, intellectuals and technocrats.

The social progress of the masses and the elimination of rural overpopulation and unemployment were also accompanied by the improvement of the cultural level of the people, medical care, social services, education, etc. Thanks to this, and despite the terror and coercion, the bureaucracy found numerous and enthusiastic supporters in all sectors of society. Since its rule enjoyed popular approval, its ideologues and propagandists could effectively impose its hegemony on the entire society, because the industrialization carried out under its leadership served the interests of society as a whole. The bureaucracy's class rule thus rested on a solid social base. Therefore, its rule could endure as long as the productive relationships, and above all its class goal of production, corresponded to the needs of economic development, i. e., until the construction of a modern industrial base had been completed.

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS OF THE SYSTEM

We have already seen that the class goal of the bureaucracy is production for production, and that this goal corresponds to the interests of economic development in an underdeveloped country in the first phase of its industrialization, that is, when the industrial base is being constructed. The length of this phase is determined primarily by the degree to which the economy is saturated by industry at the start of intensive industrialization. In Poland, the end of this period came in the second half of the 1950's. In 1956, the productive apparatus was already three times larger than in 1949, and in 1960, four times larger.

Suppose that, after having completed the essential tasks of this phase, the bureaucracy maintains its class rule as well as the same class goal. Let us consider the situation which flows from this hypothesis: A mass industrial base has been built, the forced investment of the preceding years has permitted the development of industrial capacity and the employment of idle manpower at breakneck speed. Production for production is characterized by the attempt to limit, as far as possible, all growth in production to Sector A. It seeks to convert all growth in production into new means of production. Therefore, continuing this tendency, when the economy is "saturated" by industry, signifies that the expanded means of production must be used exclusively--aside from a certain increase in consumption which is absolutely necessary but kept as small as possible--to create new means of production, to enlarge the productive apparatus. In other words, the growth of industrial capacity must be followed by the growth in the share of the national income allotted to capital accumulation.

Intensive industrialization cannot take place under conditions of equilibrium. Since the economic surplus is small, industry cannot be built up all at once without distortions. The disproportions, which appear in the course of the rapid increase in productive capacity, create the necessity for supplementary investments and lead to the still further enlargement of capital accumulation fund.

Suppose that the productive apparatus which has increased many times over due to industrialization must be fully utilized; this means that the conditions must be created for full utilization of the enlarged industrial capacity. This would entail--under the hypothesis of the maintenance of production for production--such an increase in accumulation that consumption would be pushed below the socially necessary minimum. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that such phenomena as full employment, the development of an industrial civilization, and the raising of the cultural level of society go hand in hand with an increase in consumption needs deemed essential by that society. In these conditions, reducing consumption below the essential level threatens the system with economic, social, and political catastrophe. Therefore, it is impossible to push consumption back down below this level and consequently,

equally impossible to raise the rate of accumulation so as to permit total utilization of the increased industrial capacity.

Thus the low level of overall consumption, in the last analysis, limits production itself. The bureaucratic system is not exempt from this law. However, this limitation is not brought about by the difficulties of realizing the value created on the market, but by direct restriction of enlarged reproduction. Keeping production as the goal of production after the construction of the industrial base has been completed--under conditions of industrial "saturation"--creates a contradiction between the already developed industrial capacity and the low level of consumption. This contradiction is the cause of an underutilization of industrial capacity, of waste of the economic surplus, and it puts a brake on economic development. Therefore, it is the source of a crisis.

It can be said that the crisis, in its broadest possible outlines, takes the form of a declining rate of economic growth despite increased investments for production. In the years 1950-55, the national income increased by 74 per cent, or 10 per cent annually on the average. In 1956-1960, the national income increased by 38 per cent--6.6 per cent annually on the average; but the decline in the rate of accumulation in 1956-59 with respect to the previous period must not be overlooked.

On the other hand, in the five-year period 1959-1963, the national income increased by barely 30 per cent over 1958, or an average of 5.2 per cent annually. Increase in investment for the same period, however, was 53.4 per cent (or an average of 8.9 per cent annually), of which 60 per cent, or an average of 10 per cent per year, went to industry. During the years 1960-1963, the share of accumulation in the national income was not only higher than in 1956-1959, but also higher than in 1950-1955; however, the rate of growth of the national income was about 50 per cent lower than that of the six year period and about 40 per cent lower than planned (according to the plan, the average annual growth rate of the national income was to be 8 per cent).

This means that although investment was increasing, growth rates of the national income were getting smaller and smaller. The other countries under the rule of bureaucratic dictatorship, where the role of industry in the creation of national income is comparable (Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, and, probably, the USSR), are experiencing the same phenomenon of increasing investment going hand in hand with declining growth rates. The economist Josef Goldman recently stressed this in a very significant article.

In 1960-1962, the share of material costs in total production grew from 59.7 per cent to 61.9 per cent (which comes to an increase of 137.4 billion zlotys in absolute figures), while the share of national income in the same period fell from 40.3 to 38.1 per cent. In 1962, presumably, it cost 22 billion zlotys more than in 1960 to create the same amount of national income. Therefore, the amount of investment needed to produce one unit of national income rose, and efficiency fell. What are the causes of the falling growth rate and rising costs?

1) In the conditions which result from the retention of production as the goal of production in the context of a developed economy, the braking ef-

fect of a low level of consumption on economic growth takes its most direct form in what is called "the inflationary barrier." Rapid rise in investments and employment is accompanied by an increase in total money wages; under conditions of production for production, the supply of consumer goods on the market cannot meet the increased demand. This leads to price rises and the danger of a drop in real wages below the socially necessary minimum. This barrier has already appeared in the present five-year period and it will show up in a much more acute form in 1966-1970, due to a very ambitious investment program.

2) The raw-materials barrier, or the shortage of raw materials and fuels, stands in the way of developing a manufacturing industry and is one of the reasons for the underutilization of productive capacity. This appears to be a technical problem unrelated to production relations; but in reality the cause of this acute scarcity of raw materials and fuels consists basically of two phenomena which cannot be separated from the prevailing system. First, production for the sake of production means that economic growth is limited as much as possible to Sector A. However, the costs of raw materials and fuels are significantly higher in this sector than in Sector B (production of consumer goods). Therefore, expanding the production of the means of production alone heightens the consumption of raw materials and fuels per unit of growth of the national income. Thus, the proportion of material costs is increased and raw-material reserves are more quickly exhausted.

Secondly, as will be seen further on, the prevailing production relationships entail an enormous waste of raw materials and fuels. The amount of steel needed to produce a given product is 30 per cent higher in Poland than in the advanced Western countries. The amount of coal consumed per unit of production in Polish industry is 40 to 50 per cent higher than the world average. Only 50 per cent of planned savings in raw-materials costs are realized; this speeds up the exhaustion of energy reserves and causes the raw-materials barrier. The only way, under these conditions, to get around the raw-materials barrier is to invest in the fuel and raw-materials industry. However, it is well-known that such investments are very costly and do not become profitable for a long time. About 45 per cent of current investment is allocated for raw materials. By increasing expenses this helps to slow the growth of the national income.

3) The squandering of the economic surplus in the form of excessive use of raw materials and fuels, underutilization of productive capacity, and excessive stockpiling. We have already examined the waste of raw materials. However, no one knows how much of total industrial capacity is utilized; and this is made all the more difficult to determine because the factory managers try to hide the amounts of their reserves. In the electromotive industry, utilization of productive capacity is estimated at 58 per cent. If the productive capacity of this single branch of industry were fully utilized, the national income would be increased by 18 billion zlotys annually. Underutilization of the productive apparatus is a very common phenomenon. For example, the various enterprises in the Polish construction industry use their machines at about 20 per cent of capacity. One of the sources of excessive stocks are "rejects," called "buble" in Polish economic jargon. These products are unusable and unsalable due to their poor quality. The cost of producing them represents a loss: it does not create new value or increase the available quantity of consumer goods. In 1961-1963, the national economy sustained unforeseen losses of about 21 billion zlotys as a result of this kind of production. The amount of unusable



reserves included in the plan itself is unknown. In any case, increases in reserves amounted in 1960 to 28.2 billion zlotys, or 7.4 per cent of the national income; in 1961 to 32.9 billion zlotys, or 8.1 per cent of the national income; in 1962 to 21.4 billion zlotys, or 5.1 per cent of the national income; and in 1963 to 32.3 billion zlotys or 7.3 per cent of the national income.

The most common cause of underutilization of productive capacity and unusable reserves is the general failure to adapt production to need. Production of massive quantities of products which cannot be sold but go to swell already overflowing warehouses goes hand in hand with acute shortages--not only of raw materials--but of certain kinds of tools, parts and machine mountings. This causes frequent interruptions in work, underutilization of productive capacity and general irregularity, since delay in meeting quotas must be made up at the end of the accounting period by overworking the workers and sacrificing quality. Production is not adjusted to needs either from the standpoint of the type of products produced or their quality. Furthermore, the poor quality of raw materials, tools and parts used in production helps to lower the quality of the finished products and speeds the wearing out of the means of production, causing additional waste. Although it is hard to estimate the amount of overconsumption of raw materials and fuels, underutilization of the productive plant, excessive stocks and unnecessary losses due to poor quality, there is no doubt that all this waste accounts for tens and tens of billions of zlotys per year. In the face of the immensity of this waste, all the reformist tinkering with the economy amounts to nothing more than petty expedients.

4) Inadequate utilization of the intensive factors of economic development: failure to raise productivity through modernization, technological and engineering advances (improved quality and lower material costs, etc.) as well as through organizational improvements (searching out and using reserves). The advent of "industrial saturation" means that the productive apparatus is sufficiently enlarged to permit, at the given level of productivity in agriculture, the employment of all available manpower. Therefore, the economy cannot continue to develop simply by enlarging the productive apparatus and employing reserves of manpower--that is, by the extensive method--but future economic development must be based on rising productivity, on the intensive factors.

According to data made available by the Ministry of Internal Trade in the fall of 1962, the Five Year Plan directives for the creation of new products, mechanization and automation were realized respectively at 57 per cent, 44 per cent, and 29 per cent of the planned levels. The tendency of the various plants to hide their reserves is well known. The failure to fulfill the provisions of the plan relating to technical and organizational progress, i.e., the failure to achieve the planned increases in productivity--when the extensive method of developing the economy cannot be carried any further--helps to hold down the rate of growth of the national income.

5) The export barrier, that is, the uncertain equilibrium of the balance of payments caused by increasing imports from the capitalist countries and the Polish manufacturing industry's inability to export. Eighteen per cent of the output of the manufacturing industry is earmarked for export, but the capitalist market absorbs only 4 per cent (and the most advanced Western countries barely 1 per cent). Nevertheless, trade with these countries makes up about 39 per cent of total foreign trade, and the balance of payments is particularly shaky in this branch. This is related to the fact that industry does not

meet its export quotas, its low technical level, and to the poor quality of its products.

Because of their poor quality and the excessive cost of the raw materials incorporated in them, these products go unsold abroad, or are sold at prices below their production costs. The deficit in manufactured exports is made up by increased exports of raw materials, fuels and food products, which is the least profitable type of export trade. Not only is the amount of national income available for sharing decreased thereby, but the shortage of raw materials and fuels (the raw-materials barrier) as well as of food products on the home market (the inflationary barrier), is made worse.

Since the symptoms of the economic crisis which we have enumerated above in paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 all issue from the same source, we shall analyze them all together.

The source of the crisis is often said to lie in the poor functioning of the economy, a faulty system of stimulants, poor accounting tools, and the wrong directional indices. The plants' interest lies in meeting the leading indices, more precisely the basic index, which is usually in our economic practice the value of planned total production. The plan is met all the more easily to the extent its targets are fixed at a level below the plants' productive capacities (reserves are not taken into account). Plan realization is facilitated most of all by giving priority to production of lines of goods whose prices well exceed production costs (which insures high rates of accumulation), or instead by choosing to produce types of goods whose production assures a high ratio of total value produced to labor input--in other words types of products which require a large amount of raw materials.

Improvement in quality, lowering material costs, technical betterment, in short everything serving to increase the share of labor and reduce the amount of raw materials included in the value of the final product, stand in the way of realizing the quantitative plan. Any modernization or technical improvement at plant expense creates the danger of exceeding the limits of the planned wage fund, or of failure to realize the plan's quantitative quotas. This results in the waste of raw materials, failure to adapt production to need, poor quality goods, barriers to technical progress, avoidance of production for export, and in the low profitability of industrial exports. The fault lies, in the opinion of some, in use of gross production as the leading index, which acts as a counter-stimulant; and, in the opinion of others, in the system of centralized management, which not only creates counterstimulants but paralyzes the initiative of the plant managers and the workers, thus simultaneously paralyzing the intensive factors of economic development.

We have already seen that the centralized system of management is the expression of the existing productive relationships; it cannot be fundamentally changed within the framework of these relationships. Are not the sources of the crisis, which we have enumerated above, more profound than this? And are not reforms in the techniques of planning within the framework of productive relationships enough to overcome the crisis? This is what we propose to examine below.

First of all, it is not true that the managers and workers in the factory have no possibilities of exercising initiative--they have and they demonstrate it. It is virtually impossible for a central body to decide everything. It is

still more difficult to control and supervise the execution of all specific orders and even all the directional indices--it is not possible to watch a plant from twenty different points of view at once. Therefore both the managers and the workers exercise initiatives. The workers try to decrease productivity, to hide existing reserves in their departments in order to forestall upward revisions of work norms, and they work out other angles on the job. They sacrifice quality in order to fill norms more easily. The inspectors will pass poor quality products in the "interests of the plant," because the essential thing is to insure fulfillment of the quantitative plan. The plant managers for their part conceal the plant's reserves in order to obtain the setting of modest quotas, elect to produce lines of goods which require large quantities of raw materials or high investment, in order to meet the demands of the plan more easily, and avoid production for export, which requires a large labor input. Moreover, they avoid introducing technological improvements and modernization if these must be financed by the plant.

All this mass social initiative aimed at apparent (illusory) fulfillment of the bureaucratic plan is at root aimed against the orders expressing the production goal in terms of directional indices. Therefore, it is aimed against the class goal of production. Like all social initiative, it is the conscious activity of a certain segment of society in the pursuit of its own interests. In this connection the technocrats invoke the "plant interest," which is primarily their own interest but represents a platform of compromise with the plant workers permitting both to "get along" in the present system of production and management relationships. What we have here then is the contradiction between the class goal of the ruling bureaucracy--production for production--and the interests of the groups which play an essential role in production and seek to maximize their consumption--and not a contradiction between the directives of the plan and the counterstimulants resulting from a poor choice of indices. Thus, in the last analysis, what is involved is the contradiction between the class goal of production and consumption. This contradiction is brought about by the productive relationships themselves and not by a poorly functioning management system.

This contradiction, which is inseparable from the production relationships, emerged simultaneously with the establishment of these relationships as did all the symptoms already described: waste of raw materials and fuels, failure to adapt production to needs (to the great disadvantage of export), the poor quality of goods, the roadblocks to technical progress and organizational improvement, nonutilization of the intensive factors of economic growth, etc. But during the phase of primitive industrialization, the main goal was to construct the industrial base and to put unemployed manpower to work--thus production for production and extensive economic development. All, or almost all, new production aimed at enlarging the productive apparatus was a success. Since the system insured economic expansion, its contradictions had secondary importance. But as soon as the expanded productive apparatus had absorbed the reserves of unemployed manpower, full utilization of the industrial capacity which had been constructed, and increased productivity became major problems. In these conditions, the stagnation of the intensive factors of economic growth (the failure to adapt production to need, poor quality, hindrances to technical progress and improved organization) became a roadblock to further development and therefore a problem of the first magnitude.

The emergence of the contradiction between the already developed eco-

economic capacity and the low level of total consumption revealed the disproportions and contradictions of the system in the most striking way. This contradiction then is the essential cause of the crisis and all its symptoms.

Some call for replacing the index of gross production with the index of net production as the main planning index. Others make the more far-reaching proposal that profitability become the basic index. What can we hope for from such reforms in the context of the present productive and management relationships? Probably a little more economy in the use of materials and fuels. But the essential contradictions will not be eliminated. The plants are still going to hide their reserves as they did before in order to obtain low, more easily realizable quotas. As before, they will choose to put out those products requiring high accumulation in order to insure easier compliance with the plan. They will continue their tendency to produce poor quality goods in order to meet the directional index, which by its very nature is always quantitative.

Thus, failure to adapt type and quality of production to needs will continue with all of its consequences for foreign trade. Only the buyer, thus in the last analysis the consumer, can determine the extent to which production is adapted to his needs--it is obviously impossible for this to be done by a central decision-making body, which alone and independently of the market sets prices and judges plants according to their compliance with its centrally determined, inevitably quantitative indices. Technological progress, modernization, and all improvements financed by the plants would still be in contradiction to their interests; the forces that oppose technical and organizational progress, i. e., the intensive factors of production, will be far from having been eliminated.

Thus we see that the symptoms of the crisis described in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 (waste of economic surplus, nonutilization of the intensive factors of production, and the export barrier) all flow from the production relationships and cannot, in fact, be eliminated within their context. However, let us assume for a moment that the bureaucracy succeeds in this operation. If the present economic relationships (the tendency of production for production) were maintained, the crisis would again take the form described at the beginning of this chapter.

All of the economic surplus which is now wasted would be transformed into means of production whose utilization (in conformity with the class goal of production) would produce a considerable increase in accumulation while forcing consumption below the socially necessary level. The inflationary barrier would come to the fore making growth of investment impossible, and thereby preventing adequate utilization of the new means of production. The crisis would then be reduced to its essence, the contradiction between developed economic capacity and the low level of total consumption. Thus it is clear that waste of the economic surplus and nonutilization of the intensive factors of growth are only different forms in which the basic contradiction is manifested.

Thus, any reform which improved the functioning of the economy, even if it were possible to implement it, could overcome the crisis only if it were accompanied by a change in the class goal of production, that is, going over to production for consumption. Are there right now sufficient economic re-

serves to mitigate the crisis, if only for a limited period? There were such reserves in the middle 1950's, when completion of the main tasks of primitive industrialization brought to the fore the contradiction between the developed productive potential (the productive apparatus in industry had tripled since 1949) and the low level of overall consumption; that is, when the crisis had only just begun.

The primary source of these reserves was the yield of the large investments undertaken in the preceding period which entered the final phase of their realization in 1956-1959. These large investments became profitable at that time and thus made it possible to obtain relatively high rates of growth in the national income, while at the same time reducing the share of accumulation and increasing the share of consumption.

Agriculture was a second source of reserves, reserves of particular importance to the level of consumption. As a result of industrialization, a large number of superfluous rural workers moved to the cities, or at least found employment in the urban sector. The liquidation of rural underemployment resulted in improved farming and increased income for the majority of peasant proprietors. It therefore became possible to increase the volume of farm products and to raise agricultural productivity. But under the Stalinist policy of forcibly depriving the peasants of their surpluses and threatening them with expropriation en masse, this potential for growth was not exploited, for under such conditions the peasants had no incentive to increase production. The new agrarian policy based on the renunciation of forced collectivization created conditions under which production could be profitable because of a less severe system of draining off surpluses--that is, by concessions to the profit motive of the peasants--and at the same time permitted the exploitation of reserves. Thus we saw a rapid growth in agricultural production, without heavy state investment and without a radical change in the technical basis of agriculture.

In both cases these were reserves for increasing consumption. The exploitation of these reserves alone brought an important increase in the consumption fund. This was a necessary evil from the bureaucracy's point of view--a concession which would enable it to maintain its power and class rule through the social and political crisis of those stormy years. Politically the reason for the utilization of these reserves must be put in the context of the general revolt against the Stalinist forms of dictatorship; and most of all, we must not forget the pressure of the workers. The result was a 30 per cent increase in real wages on the average and a new agricultural policy permitting an increase in peasant incomes.

These concessions to consumption resulted in temporarily narrowing the gap between the developed industrial capacity and the low level of overall consumption. It is to this that we must look for the principal cause of the improvement in the economic situation in 1956-1959. But the reserves which were providing the means for increasing the consumption fund were an outgrowth of the preceding period--of the phase of intense industrialization. When the system reached its crisis point, it was no longer producing these reserves; and those remaining from the previous period must eventually be exhausted.

Toward the end of the 1956-1960 five year plan, all the productive

forces whose construction was begun in previous years had been put into service; therefore continued economic development required either increased productivity or increased investment. In this period also agriculture attained the maximum increase in production commensurate with its technical base, its structure and the rate of state taxation. Agricultural production rose 15 per cent in 1956-1958, but only 5 per cent in 1959-1960, while today the rise in agricultural production can barely keep pace with population increase. Stagnation in agricultural production has become a barrier to increased consumption.

In order to win a lasting victory over the crisis, it would be necessary to effect a radical change in the proportions of expansion and investment; to turn to modernizing and reshaping the technical basis of agriculture, as well as to promoting a rapid and uninterrupted growth in the manufacture of consumer goods. In short, the production goal must be changed.

However, the bureaucracy succeeded in maintaining its political power and its class rule during the class struggles of 1956-1957, and in stabilizing its class dictatorship in the years 1958-1959. The production relations on which its rule is based survived as well as the class goal of production. In these conditions, it is not surprising that, after the reserves which permitted the stabilization were exhausted (exactly at the beginning of the current five year plan), the economic crisis entered its mature phase. Today, the system no longer has available any large reserves; and its difficulties no longer flow from a Stalinist agrarian policy, or from the necessity for rapid construction of an arms industry from the ground up, for instance. The economic crisis is becoming clearly a crisis of the production relationships.

Consequently, there is no longer any way to mitigate the crisis. To the contrary, every new advance of industry under the conditions of production for production's sake can only increase the contradiction between the developed productive capacity and the low level of consumption, thereby contributing to the development of the crisis.

The investment plan for 1966-1970 provides for the creation of about 1.5 million new jobs to take account of the sudden sharp increase in the working age population (more would be needed to insure full employment) and for investment expenditures of 830 to 840 billion zlotys. This means an almost 20 per cent increase in the investment share of the national income. Despite the large amounts to be spent, the plan provides only for a 30 per cent increase in the national income for the five years. It is apparent then that the bureaucracy is taking account of the braking effects of the system even at the planning stage. During the Six Year Plan, the national income increased by 74 per cent, employment by 2.4 million jobs--with investments of 319 billion zlotys (at the 1961 rate). The report of the Central Committee of the United Workers Party to the Fourth Party Congress shows that the plan is based on the assumption of a stabilization in real wages; in other words the accumulation fund is set just as high as the inflationary barrier will permit. However, experience has shown that actual realization of planned investments in fact requires expenditures significantly higher than those provided for in the plan. In this case, either the limits of the inflationary barrier will be exceeded, which will force real wages below the socially necessary minimum, or the investment program will not be carried out, which would lead to further decline in the rate of growth of the national income and a dangerous increase in unemploy-

ment. In either case, it is inevitable that the crisis will deepen.

The productive relationships based on bureaucratic ownership have become a serious hindrance to the development of the productive forces. As long as they continue to exist the crisis will worsen from day to day. The only and the inevitable solution to this crisis is abolition of these production relations and the abolition of bureaucratic class rule along with them.

## Chapter VI

### THE PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS IN AGRICULTURE AND THE PRESENT CRISIS

The productive relationships in Polish agriculture are based jointly on individual peasant ownership and state monopolization of the market. (The state is virtually the sole supplier of industrial commodities to the countryside, and it buys the greatest part of agricultural produce.)

In 1961, production for the market accounted for about 60.8 per cent of the net production of the individual peasant farms. (Net production is that part of total production remaining after the material costs of production have been deducted.) These farms are quite dependent on the market, even though they are operated by families producing most of their own livelihood. This dependence arises for one of two fundamentally different reasons. The farm in question may be a specialized, scientifically managed enterprise producing entirely for the market; in this case, the consumption needs of the family operating it are satisfied via the market.

Or, the farm in question may be at a low level of development; then it is the unfavorable relationship of prices for agricultural products to prices for industrial products, and the resulting financial pressures, which force families who want to keep their farms to consume less.

According to the data on peasant farms making an accounting to IER (the Institute of Agricultural Economics), and these farms are better off than the average, the peasant families' expenditures for food and clothing increase with the size of their farms. Aside from the amount spent on food and clothing, there is no notable difference in the expenditures of the various groups. However, if the amount spent on meat is separated out from total food expenditures, the differences become striking.

In the period 1961-1962, on farms of up to three hectares (44.6 per cent of these farms), the per capita meat consumption of peasant families was 26.2 kg.; on farms of three to seven hectares (28.9 per cent of the total), 27.7 kg.; of seven to ten hectares (12.7 per cent of the total), 34.3 kg.; on farms of ten to fifteen hectares (7 per cent of the total), 39.3 kg.; and on farms of over fifteen hectares (2.8 per cent of the total), 46.6 kg.

It will be remembered that diet A (barely adequate) provides for 37 kg. of beef and pork per person per year. Thus 85 per cent of peasant families, who moreover are the principal producers of meat, consume less than the bare minimum considered adequate from the physiological standpoint. It is not surprising then that differences in income show up first in differences in meat consumption.

In addition to meat consumption, the consumption of potatoes also varies strongly among the various groups. Normally, less potatoes are consumed as the standard of living improves. But in peasant families the opposite



occurs. In 1961-1962, per capita consumption of potatoes by peasant families on farms of less than three hectares was 216 kg.; 217 kg. on farms of three to seven hectares; 239 kg. on farms of seven to ten hectares; 251 kg. on farms of ten to fifteen hectares; and 269 kg. on farms of over fifteen hectares.

From the preceding data it will be seen that farm dependence on the market does not increase consumption but rather imposes limitations on the basic consumption of peasant families.

What then forces peasant families to limit their personal consumption to this extent?

First, direct financial pressure, that is, taxes and compulsory deliveries of produce to the state. Of course, compulsory deliveries are paid for, but at prices about half those on the free market. In 1961, those farms which made an accounting of their operations received only 7 per cent of their income from the compulsory deliveries. This means that through compulsory deliveries the state appropriated 7 per cent of the value of the marketed produce of the average peasant farm gratis. In the same year, 1961, taxes accounted for 7.5 per cent of the income from the production of the average farm.

The second factor is the pressure of the state monopoly on the market. The state is the sole supplier of everything the peasants buy on the market. It is also the purchaser. In 1961, 76 per cent of the income from marketed farm products (of the average farm) came from sale of produce to the state (of this, compulsory deliveries account for 7 per cent). In addition to the compulsory deliveries, the state buys farm produce both on a contractual and non-compulsory basis at prices 30 per cent lower than those of the free market.

What compels the peasants to sell the greater part of their produce "voluntarily" to the state under unfavorable conditions?

In some regions, contracted and non-compulsory purchasing are the only forms of sale. There is another factor which plays a decisive role, however--the pressure brought to bear by the state as the sole supplier of the manufactured commodities essential for agriculture and peasant families. Only those peasants who sign the state contracts are permitted to buy coal, which is essential to animal husbandry (which provides more than 69 per cent of the income of the average farm), and indeed fertilizer.

The ruling bureaucracy uses the state monopoly on the market to open up an artificial "price scissors" and to drain the countryside of its economic surplus. There is much concern today, and rightly so, about the price scissors problem, that is, the losses to the countryside from the unfavorable relationship of prices for agricultural products to prices for manufactured goods (compared with the Poland of the interwar period). Let us compare the prices (in kilos of rye) of certain manufactured goods bought by peasants in 1927-1928 with those of 1962.

In 1927-1928, peasants paid the equivalent of 100 kilos of rye for a plow; now, they pay the equivalent of 112 kilos of rye for the same item in terms of noncompulsory or contracted sale prices (69 per cent of the income from the sale of farm produce for the average farm), or 73.3 kilos, in terms of free-market prices (24 per cent of farm income).

Before the war peasants paid the equivalent of 31 kilos of rye for 100 kilos of superphosphate; today they pay the equivalent of 47 kilos in terms of noncompulsory sale prices, and 31 in terms of free-market prices.

A pair of shoes before the war cost the equivalent of 99 kilos of rye; now the peasant pays the equivalent of 133 kilos at the noncompulsory market price, or 90 kilos at the free-market price.

He used to pay 36 kilos of rye for [illegible figure] of sugar, now he pays 53 kilos at noncompulsory market prices, and 36 kilos at free-market prices.

In the meantime the productive capacity of industry has risen by 600 per cent in comparison with 1928, productivity has increased much more than that, and the per unit cost of production in industry has decreased more than in agriculture. Artificially low prices for agricultural products are the principal means of appropriating economic surpluses; these surpluses are acquired not by increasing agricultural production but by reducing the amount of necessities consumed by the peasant population. This method, moreover, limits the reinvestment potential of peasant farms.

What produces this tendency?

It has been noted (Chapter III) that from the bureaucracy's point of view the purchase of food from the peasantry is a component of the purchase price of labor-power in the industrial and service sectors. We have also seen that, from the bureaucracy's standpoint, production for consumption (which, by the force of circumstances, is the character of agricultural production) is a necessary evil, since production for production is its goal. Thus, for the purposes of achieving this class goal, the level of employment and the minimum living standard determine the extent of agricultural production. The aim then is not to promote the maximum growth of agriculture, but to obtain the necessary food for the workers in industry, construction, communications and services at the minimum cost. The system of siphoning off the surpluses from the individual farms by forcing down the selling price of their products (thereby limiting the peasantry's consumption and reinvestment potential) is consequently a means of lowering the cost of labor-power and derives from the class goal of production. Thus the exploitation of the peasants is a consequence of the exploitation of the workers, and in this manner indissolubly bound up with the prevailing production relationships in industry.

In spite of this, the living standard of the peasants in Poland today is significantly higher than it was between the two wars. The same holds true for overall productivity in agriculture and, above all, for per capita productivity. This is the result of the country's industrialization, which has liberated the countryside from the principal economic affliction of the interwar period (rural overpopulation): Millions of superfluous people have moved to the cities, or at least have found jobs and a wage outside agriculture. This occurred in the period 1949-1955; but at that time the policy of forcibly appropriating agricultural surpluses and threatening the peasants with forced collectivization, i. e., expropriation, prevented the potential, opened up by the elimination of overpopulation on the land, from being used to increase agricultural production and peasant consumption.

In 1956 the collectivization policy was disavowed and the methods used to drain the countryside of its surpluses were changed--the economic constraint of the state monopoly on the market and the "price scissors" took the place of administrative and police constraint. This was a clear concession and was granted unwillingly; it permitted the peasants to utilize the reserves created by the elimination of rural overpopulation to increase both their production and their consumption.

But the relationship between the peasant producers and the state has not changed in essence. It is still based on the appropriation of the peasants' economic surplus--by new methods--and on acquiring the necessary volume of commodities by limiting peasant consumption and reinvestment potential, rather than by developing the agricultural economy. It could not be otherwise since the productive relationships in industry have not changed. This is why the growth in agricultural production had to come to a halt--and in fact ceased--when the reserves created during the six-year period were exhausted. Total agricultural production rose by about 20 per cent in the years 1956-1960, but three-fourths of this increase was accounted for by the years 1956-1958. In the last four years (1961-1964) agricultural production has barely kept up with population increase, and its occasional fluctuations have become economic catastrophes. Stagnation has reappeared, but in contrast to the period 1949-1955 no new reserves are being created today, which could serve as a basis for accelerated future development. The 1966-1970 plan provides for a constant level of employment in the private sector of agriculture and for some reduction in the area under cultivation.

Today, stagnation in the agricultural economy does not arise from an "improper agrarian policy," i. e., from a given method of draining off the peasants' economic surpluses, but from the essence of this kind of appropriation which deprives the agricultural economy of the material prerequisites for development. (The Fund for Agricultural Development does not remedy this situation. The price of using a cooperative tractor to cultivate one hectare of land, according to the scale in use, is 220 zlotys, the equivalent of 100 kgs. of rye at the noncompulsory market price, and equal to the price of a one-share plow. This type of mechanization is too expensive for most farms, and in 1959-1962 the Fund for Agricultural Development was utilized at a rate of about 22 per cent.) This the crisis in agriculture flows directly from the prevailing productive relationships.

What is the outlook for the future? To answer this question we must consider a factor which we passed over until we had completed our discussion of the relationships between the peasant producers and the state, i. e., the social differentiation of the peasantry.

In 1960, small farms (between 0.5 and 5 hectares) made up 52.5 per cent of all farms (with farms of less than 3 hectares representing more than 40 per cent) and took up 27.5 per cent of land under cultivation.

Farms of more than 10 hectares made up 10.7 per cent of all farms and occupied 32.6 per cent of the area in use. The largest farms (more than 15 hectares) must account for an important part of this, but the Bureau of Statistics publishes no data regarding them.

There are 87.5 head of livestock and 23.3 horses for each 100 small farms

but 590 head of stock and 216.2 horses for each 100 farms of over 15 hectares. Also, there were 98 private tractors for each 100 villages studied by the Institute of Agricultural Economics in 1962, and all of these were owned by farms of over 15 hectares. The data on structure and equipment of farms show capitalist relationships in embryo. However, the process of property concentration is very slow and day labor plays only a very small role; hardly 3 per cent of farms use it (300 days per year at the most). What is the reason for this?

The conditions for the development of capitalist farms are the following:

- 1) the largest farms must have sufficient means for accumulation; 2) there must be an abundant supply of cheap land issuing from the failure of small farms; 3) there must be a plentiful supply of cheap agricultural labor.

During the years 1950-1955, the exploitation of the countryside took the form principally of compulsory deliveries and taxes which increased with the size of the farms. The anti-kulak policy added to this deprived the large farms of the means for accumulation and even drove them into bankruptcy.

After 1956, the draining off of agricultural surpluses has been carried out principally by means of the price scissors which is manipulated by the state monopoly of the market. This type of exploitation affects all farm producers equally and consequently is borne more easily by the richer farms which possess the means of capital accumulation, but it is a heavy burden for the poorest farms. If the mass of small peasants (52.5 per cent) were faced with the loss of their extra-agricultural incomes simultaneously with a large opening of the price scissors, their financial burdens would become insupportable and they would be forced into bankruptcy. This would result in the appearance of an abundant supply of cheap land and labor-power which are essential to capitalist agriculture.

What saves most small farms from bankruptcy and blocks the establishment of capitalist relations in the countryside is the employment of peasants in state enterprises. So-called peasant-workers make up about 26 per cent of all wage-earners in the state sector and their farms account for 45.5 per cent of the country's privately owned farms. To a very large extent the excess labor force has been absorbed by employing in industry people who possess small farms and continue to live in the country.

The reductions in the work force which have occurred in the factories in recent years have shown that peasant-workers as a group are particularly endangered by layoffs. At the same time, in 1962, for the first time since the war, a 15 per cent drop in the price of labor-power on the land could be noted.

The investment plan for the years 1966-1970 provides for the creation of 1.5 million new jobs, but even if the plan's provisions are met, this will be less than the growth in the working-age population. With unemployment and serious pressure on the labor market, it is easy to predict that those who live in industrial centers will get the first chance at the available jobs, and that the peasant-workers will be the first to fall victim to layoffs. This is why it seems utopian to expect that the current level of employment in private agriculture will be maintained even if the plan is fulfilled. However, it seems unlikely that it will be fulfilled for, as usual, the planned investment fund will certainly prove inadequate for realizing the program of material investments. However, since the amount of the investment fund is set as high as the inflationary barrier will

permit, increasing it could entail serious consequences. However, nonrealization of the planned material investments would mean a catastrophic increase in unemployment and would result first of all in massive layoffs of peasant-workers.

As has been noted, the high percentage of peasant-workers keeps rural overpopulation in check and thus benefits the mass of small farms; moreover, it is a major barrier to the establishment of capitalist relationships. In due course then, the growing crisis in industry will inevitably bring about a reappearance of excess manpower in the countryside (layoffs of peasant-workers) and bankruptcy for many small farms. This would mean a partial restoration of overpopulation on the land (a step backward in comparison to the achievements in the countryside during the period of industrialization), as well as the creation of conditions for the transformation of the richest peasant holdings into capitalist farms.

It is apparent then that the crisis of the agricultural economy is intimately linked to the economic crisis in basic industry and, in the context of the present productive relationships, can only deepen. Thus, the only way to overcome the crisis in agriculture, and in the economy as a whole, is to abolish the productive relationships upon which bureaucratic class rule is based.

## Chapter VII

### THE FIRST ANTI-BUREAUCRATIC REVOLUTION, 1956-1957

Our document was to include a chapter devoted to analyzing the class struggles of 1956-1957. As a result of the intervention of the MSW (political police), we have not had the time to write it. However, we believe that it is desirable to give a brief presentation of the basic theses of that unwritten chapter because it is important for an understanding of our political position; and because our attempt to understand the events of October, as well as the causes of the collapse of the left tendency and the defeat of the revolution of 1956, was the point of departure for the evolution of our views.

The international crisis of Stalinism, the first phase of the general crisis of the dictatorship of the bureaucracy, erupted in the 1950's. It led to the first revolutionary demonstrations of the workers: the general strike in the German Democratic Republic, the demonstrations and street fighting in Berlin on June 17, 1956, a series of strikes in the concentration camps of the USSR, the events in Poznan of June 1956, and the first anti-bureaucratic revolutions in Poland and Hungary.

The economic cause of the events of this period lay in the beginning of the system's general economic crisis. Following the construction of the economic infrastructure and the employment of surplus manpower, the contradiction between the developed productive capacity and the low level of overall consumption became apparent. In these circumstances, most people could no longer look to individual social advancement for a better life; such hopes now depended on the material, social and cultural betterment of the particular stratum of society to which they belonged. The particular class interest of the peasantry forcibly deprived of its surplus, of the workers paid a starvation wage, and of the supervisory personnel--relatively low paid and completely lacking in decision-making powers, boiled down in each case to some kind of increased consumption, which was in contradiction to the bureaucratic class goal of production.

Thus, as soon as all these particular class interests took on a decisive importance in economic and social life and in individual consciousness, all society came into conflict with the ruling bureaucracy. The Stalinist system of absolute police dictatorship, which attempted to deprive all social classes and strata of all opportunity to formulate their own interests and to fight for their implementation, became the object of universal hatred and provoked revolt instead of submission. This form of dictatorship had ceased to be an effective instrument of bureaucratic rule; therefore, it was pointless to maintain it. So the time for the Twentieth Congress [of the Soviet Communist Party] had come.

Since the social crisis appeared in the first phase of the system's economic breakdown, industry still had considerable reserves remaining from the period of primitive industrialization. These reserves were mentioned in the preceding chapters and it will be recalled that they were reserves destined for consumption and that they were released owing to the threat hanging over the

regime and to the direct pressure of the workers. The mere existence of these reserves, however, made it possible to effect a temporary stabilization and some reform within the system. This was the objective means by which the bureaucracy was able to maintain and reinforce its class rule.

Time was required, however, to bring this potential into play. This is why the bureaucracy had to use political means to hold onto its power in the short run in countries where revolutions had broken out, in the hope that it could achieve long-run stability based on the utilization of the economic reserves at its disposal.

The Hungarian bureaucracy was rescued by Soviet armed intervention. And the success of this intervention was facilitated because the sudden halt of the revolution in Poland, the delay of the social crisis in the USSR, and the absence of a revolutionary situation in Czechoslovakia isolated the Hungarian revolution.

In Poland, the bureaucracy held onto its power by peaceful means. How was it able to do this?

The outcome of revolution is decided by the struggle between the two basic social classes: the working class and the bureaucracy. The Poznan events showed quite clearly that these are the two principal forces involved. The hegemony of the working class as the most powerful and consistently anti-bureaucratic force in society is the precondition for the victory of the revolution.

However, in order for the working class to be able to play the leading role, it must be conscious of its own goals and formulate them into a political program. As a class fighting for power, it must organize its own party (or its own parties).

What has been called the October Left, which was made up in large part of the natural leaders of the workers, the youth and the intellectuals, could have been the embryo of the political vanguard of the working masses. The Left differed from the liberal tendency essentially in its positions with regard to the Workers' Councils, in which it saw a base for a new relation of production and the framework for a new political regime. But it was a heterogeneous current. The Left did not differentiate itself from the technocratic current in the Workers' Councils (the demand that the Councils run the factories did not go beyond the limits of the technocratic program); nor did it differentiate itself from the liberal wing of the bureaucracy in national politics. It did not set itself off clearly from the general anti-Stalinist front as a specifically proletarian movement. In this situation the Left was clearly incapable of formulating its own political program, of organizing agitation for it among the masses, or of forming parties. This is why the Left was incapable of transforming itself into an independent political force and of avoiding becoming merely a leftist auxiliary of the liberal wing of the bureaucracy in power.

The Eighth Plenum of the Central Committee of the United Workers Party of Poland was a victory for the liberal section of the bureaucracy. This wing of the bureaucracy proposed to alleviate the social crisis and stabilize the system by internal reforms and economic concessions, by taking the leadership

of the mass movement in order to keep it within limits safe for the system.

They chose a popular leadership and presented a platform of reforms and promises essential to the aims of the bureaucracy. The abandonment of collectivization and the reform in agricultural policy corresponded to the aspirations of the countryside (though it was most to the interest of the rich peasants). Widening the field for private enterprise met the desires of the petty bourgeoisie. The accord with the church hierarchy eliminated an important factor of political tension and created a new opportunity for political propaganda (the electoral agreement with Wyszynski). The policy of raising the salaries and incomes of plant managers and technicians, which was consistently followed after October, tended to commit the technocrats to the system. The critique of the Six Year Plan and the announcement of a new economic policy aroused universal hopes for improvement in living standards. However, it was primarily the national question which brought the new leadership its popularity. The masses tended to regard the sovereignty recently won by the Polish bureaucracy as their own. On the other hand, the working class had not even been promised the wage increase it later won. The existence of the Workers' Councils in the factories was recognized as a fait accompli, but the Councils were given no real rights, and the new leadership of the bureaucracy at first quietly, and then openly, opposed their development.

October 1956, however, was not only the month of the Eighth Plenum but also the revolution's culminating point. In the ensuing months, the new leadership of the bureaucracy found itself totally deprived of the means to smother the revolution by force. The only way for the bureaucracy to stay in power was for the new leadership to win general authority and confidence, hegemony over the masses, by maneuvers and concessions until economic stabilization brought about a diminution of the social crisis and the state apparatus could recover its repressive force and its control over society. The formulation of a proletarian class program, and the organization of a movement around it to fight the government of the liberal bureaucracy, was the only road to the expansion of the revolution.

At this decisive moment, the Left not only did not present such a program or organize its own party, but it even gave its support to the liberal bureaucracy, the principal anti-revolutionary force. The immense prestige which the militants of the Left had acquired in their milieu was transferred to the new leadership. In this way the Left helped to keep the bureaucracy in power and set the stage for its own political demise and the defeat of the revolution. In the spring of 1957, from the rostrum of the Ninth Plenum, the leadership of the bureaucracy could already proclaim a "two-front struggle" to re-establish the monolithic regime in the party and to condemn openly the idea of expanding the Workers' Councils and calling a National Congress of Workers' Councils as an "anarchist-type utopia." In the fall of 1957 the bureaucracy was already able to move on to the decisive battle. It began by smashing the streetcar workers' strike in Lodz with police methods. It went on to suppress Po Prostu,\* and had the police charge the massive street demonstrations in

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\*Po Prostu (Speaking Plainly) was a student paper reflecting views of left militant elements of the October 1956 movement. On September 11, 1957 the Gomulka government prevented it from going to press on charges of pessimism and failing to publicize governmental successes. On October 2, 1957, it was closed



Warsaw (July 4 to 10, 1957) to finish off freedom of the press, as well as to purge the party--thus eliminating freedom of internal discussion and restoring its monolithic character. Finally, in the spring of 1958, the moribund Workers' Councils were brought under party control directly through the plant committees, and indirectly through the trade-union apparatus (the creation of the so-called Congress of Self-governing Workers' Sections). Thus all those conquests of October which went further than reform within the limits of the system were liquidated and the October Left was definitively shattered.

Utilization of the economic reserves, and the increase in real wages won by the workers, created the basis for the stabilization of the reformed dictatorship of the bureaucracy. However, as has been seen, these reserves were transitory in character. The productive relationships have not changed. This is why, as soon as the reserves were exhausted toward the end of the last five-year period, the economic crisis passed into its mature stage. The system has no more economic reserves nor any base for reformist maneuvers. The possibilities for reforms which do not strike at the class character of the regime have been exhausted. With the renewal of the economic crisis, the general social crisis began.

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down. Following protest demonstrations by students in Lodz and Cracow, the Gomulka regime expelled the Po Prostu editors from the Polish Communist Party. The suppression of the paper was a major step in the regime's tightening of its control after the relative liberalization of the post-October period.

## Chapter VIII

### THE GENERAL SOCIAL CRISIS OF THE SYSTEM

History has seen many regimes founded on injustice which endured long centuries. No regime has ever fallen simply because it exploited and oppressed the masses. But, in the long run, no class can retain power if its position in society rests on force alone. It owes its power to the social benefits resulting from the program implemented by it and these benefits permit it to impose its own opinions, ideas, moral authority--in a word, its hegemony--on the other classes and social strata. If this is lacking, even bayonets will not save the situation.

What must the ruling class guarantee to the other classes and social strata in order to gain from them the indispensable support and to "subdue their spirits"? It must guarantee an opportunity within the framework of the system for each social group to achieve what it considers the minimum prosperity--the improvement of the material and cultural conditions for development, the chance for social advancement, etc.; and all this is dependent on economic development.

For as long as the productive relationships, on which the class rule of the bureaucracy is based, favored the rapid development of the economy, that is, during the period of intense industrialization, massive social advancement improved the situation of millions of people, raised the cultural level of the entire society and thus assured a firm social basis for bureaucratic hegemony. During the period of stabilization following October, the mobilization of the masses was brought to a halt, but the workers and almost all social groupings won substantial increases in income. What can the bureaucracy now in the system's period of economic crisis guarantee the other classes and layers of society?

The workers, for objective reasons, are the bureaucracy's principal enemy. They are at the bottom of the social hierarchy. From the foremen to the Prime Minister, everyone dominates them and they dominate no one. Exploitation of the workers is the material base of the system, and therefore the entire apparatus of power and coercion is directed primarily against the working class and used for the political protection of exploitation. That was the way it was before, and that is the way it is now. In the years 1949-1955 and 1956-1959, the workers' situation improved, though in a different manner each time. The official statistics we have already cited (see Chapter 3) show that the average real income per capita of the families of industrial workers increased by 2.6 per cent in the period 1960-1963, that is, by 0.6 per cent per year on the average.

If we take into consideration: 1) the hidden rise in the cost of living due to the change in type of commodities; 2) the fact that in recent years price increases have mainly hit the necessities (which absorb the greatest part of the

budgets of the poorest families); we find that the workers' standard of living has shown a tendency to decline over the last four years. This is felt most of all by families which have not benefited from social advancement and in which the number of wage-earners has not increased.

As we have already noted, the 1966-1970 plan provides for the creation of 1.5 million new jobs at the enormous cost of 830 to 840 billion zlotys in investment. However, according to the demographers' calculations (Holtzer's article published in Trybuna Ludu before the fifteenth plenum of the Central Committee of the United Polish Workers Party), the growth in the working-age population will reach about two million. This means that there would be 500,000 jobs too few, even if the plan were fulfilled. No increase in real wages was promised at the Fourth Party Congress, but we can deduce from the published data (a 28 per cent increase in individual consumption, 18 per cent increase in employment), however, that if the plan is completely fulfilled, average real wages will rise about 10 per cent in the next five years, that is, by about 2 per cent per year. However, as Professor Kalecki has shown, the necessary promotions which occur in the course of a year absorb about 2 per cent of the wage fund. At the same time, the wage differential among the workers, senior cadres, engineers and technical personnel is increasing. In 1960-1963, according to official statistics, the average real per capita income of families of technical cadres in industry rose by 11.6 per cent and that of workers' families by 2.6 per cent.

It was mentioned in the report of the Central Committee to the Fourth Party Congress that the investment funds have been set up in such a way that at least "stabilization of real wages" can be achieved, that is, they have been set at the limit of the inflationary barrier. This means that workers' real wages will necessarily experience a slight decline over the course of the next five-year period, if the plan is faithfully fulfilled.

However, in the twenty years of the existence of the Polish People's Republic, investments have never corresponded to the prescribed sums, and have never been executed on time. Nothing indicates that the coming five-year period will be an exception in this regard. The sum of 840 billion zlotys will, in all probability, prove insufficient for the realization of the material program of investments; and the failure of this program would mean a sharp increase in unemployment. It will prove absolutely necessary to find additional means to realize the investment program. Since these sums can only be drawn from the consumption fund, real wages will not be stabilized, contrary to expectations, but will experience a considerable drop.

The extent to which the accumulation funds can be supplemented by lowering real wages, however, is limited by considerations which are political as well as economic. It is therefore probable that, despite everything, these investments will not be carried out and that the 1.5 million new jobs provided for in the plan will not be created in time. The number of the unemployed therefore will exceed a half million.

The extent of this massive unemployment will probably force the economy's rulers to employ part of these people despite the lack of jobs. In this case, the real salary fund will increase, but production will not. This will provoke an upset in the market equilibrium, price rises and a further decline

in real wages; but, nonetheless, hundreds of thousands of individuals of working age will not find jobs.

It is clear, therefore, that as the crisis matures, the system not only deprives the workers of any hope for improving their material conditions, but proves itself incapable of guaranteeing them that the given level of wages and employment will be maintained; in other words, it deprives them of their security for tomorrow.

Treating overall consumption as a necessary evil, the bureaucracy seeks to keep the wages of the many categories of wage-earners at the subsistence level. This holds true not only for workers in industry, construction and transport, but also for the majority of communications workers, white-collar personnel in city offices in commerce, the health services, education and the lower ranks of the state administration. With respect to their material situation and their outlook for the future, this mass of poorly-paid wage-earners scarcely differs from the workers. Thus, in these circumstances, all we have said regarding the material conditions of the life of the workers in the period of the economic crisis of the system also holds true for the majority of wage-earners in the nonagricultural sectors.

Industrialization brought a considerable improvement in the social and cultural life of the workers; it favored the achievement of universal education and gave young people a chance to advance themselves through free access to higher education for all. Many of these acquisitions--low-priced state housing, free medical care, social services, etc.--given the low level of workers' wages constitute an essential component of the historically determined subsistence standard. Under the pressure of the crisis, the bureaucracy cuts back investment "in people" first of all and this chiefly hits the poorest segments of the population--the workers, poorly-paid salaried employees, the poorest section of the peasantry.

Despite particularly bad housing conditions, Poland ranks in one of the last places in Europe with respect to per capita housing construction. Furthermore, we are now in the process of changing over to a system of building co-operatives which are to furnish 60 per cent of all dwellings over the next five-year period. In this way, building costs are being transferred from the state budget to the private incomes of the people. This means that the available housing will be for those who can pay and not for those who need it most. The chances of getting state-owned housing are becoming illusory, and workers whose wages barely cover their daily expenses have nothing to put into a housing-savings book.

Curbs on expenditures for cultural benefits, as well as rising prices for goods and services of a cultural character, are causing a setback in the spread of culture. Attendance at plays is decreasing, the number of books and periodicals printed--including school books--has decreased in striking fashion. This is especially felt by working-class families on a subsistence level, for whom increased prices of theater and movie tickets, of books and periodicals, etc., means giving up a number of basic cultural advantages.

Cutbacks in spending on higher education--above all on scholarships, student cafeterias and university buildings--will make access to higher education more difficult for working-class, peasant, and small-town youth. The

percentage of sons of workers and peasants in institutions of higher learning is declining--financial barriers limit their right to education and, therefore, their opportunities for advancement.

The deepening of the crisis inevitably leads to worsening conditions for the workers in the shops. The emerging threat of unemployment leads to greater arbitrariness on management's part and makes it easier for officials to put pressure on the workers. Formerly, government officials loved to wear blue overalls, willingly advertising their working-class origins; they gave medals to the best workers and were embarrassed to pay a manager ten times more than a worker. Today, government officials dress in elegant clothing, and the managers--who sweat the surplus product out of the workers--are the positive heroes of the building of socialism; and their autos and villas are eloquent testimony to their social prestige and civic virtues. Today exploitation is out in the open for all to see; it is no longer carried on by means of propaganda and forced enthusiasm, but openly by means of the whip of economic sanctions, administrative duress, and--if any attempt is made to resist--by police coercion. Today the government and the trade unions jointly decide on firings and collaborate in the execution of these decisions (Procedure R [for redukeja--'layoff'])).

It is clear that the crisis is getting worse, as not only the material conditions of the workers but also their social and cultural condition deteriorate. This situation is reinforcing the enslavement of the workers in the shops; it is depriving them of the chance to satisfy even their minimum desires within the framework of the present productive and social relationships.

The crisis is forcing the workers to stand up against the bureaucrats and the system in order to defend the present level of their material and cultural existence.

The bureaucracy will not concede one zloty of its own free will. In any case, given the crisis and the lack of economic reserves, it has nothing more to concede to pressure. Under these circumstances, any large-scale strike action will inevitably turn into a political conflict with the bureaucracy. This is the only way the workers can change their conditions. Today, in the epoch of the universal crisis of the system, the workers' interests lie in revolution: in the abolition of the bureaucracy and the production relationships associated with it, in taking control of their own labor and its product--control of production--into their own hands, that is, in establishing an economic, social and political system based on workers' democracy. The interests of the majority of wage-earners, because of their proletarian situation, are parallel to those of the workers.

For the countryside, the crisis means above all a massive decline in the number of peasant-workers and the re-emergence of overpopulation on the land, the loss of a source of extra-agricultural income which helps the families of poor peasants (the most numerous in our country) to live, and which also permitted the existence of a great number of small farms. For a majority of the peasants, this means not only no hope for social betterment and progress, but also a deterioration in their material living standards and the threat of losing their farms. Only a small minority can gain--the richest farmers, to whom the supply of labor and cheap land will open the way to capital accumulation. However, this same group also feels the financial pressure of the state

as a barrier to its accumulation and capitalist development. It is for this reason that, though present policy is very lenient toward them, they are hostile to the system or, at least, they are not giving active support to the ruling bureaucracy.

If the entire society is robbed of its hopes, it is the youth who feel it the most. For them hope is their future and their life. Unemployment is a calamity for the class as a whole, but most of all for young workers reaching working age. Lack of jobs will hit them most of all. The development of the system of co-ownership in housing construction robs most citizens of any opportunity to improve their living arrangements; but here also the youth, reaching the age to marry and establish families, will feel it the most. Most of all, they will be unable to find housing.

The threat of overpopulation on the land is a plague for the majority of the peasantry but above all for the young generation, for whom there will be no jobs in industry and who will be able to count only on finding a menial place on the farms of their parents or older brothers. Cutbacks in the funds allotted to education is deleterious to society as a whole, but the hardest hit by this are the young peasants and workers, as well as small-town youth, who thus find themselves deprived of their opportunities for advancement. In the face of the growing difficulty of finding a place in the life of society, the young people in every social stratum are most affected by the economic, social, ideological and moral crisis, and are simultaneously at every level of society the potentially most revolutionary element.

It might seem that the technocracy, as a social grouping linked to the ruling class by privileges and its place in the process of production, is today the principal support of bureaucratic authority in society. It undoubtedly would be if the technocrats could attain their natural aspirations within the framework of existing society. Prior to 1956 the technocracy was a layer of poorly-paid supervisors with much lower salaries than those accruing to the small caste of specialized administrators employed by the capitalists before the war. However, the leading cadres of industry were created along with industry itself and the directors' chairs were occupied by a host of people who owe everything to the system. Today, the technocracy is a stable stratum conscious of its own interests. It has obtained its share of high-consumption privileges and at the same time comes into conflict with the workers through its day-to-day supervisory function and its aspirations for a "socialism of the managers."

Nevertheless, we have already seen (Chapter III) that the class goal of production in the present system is alien to the interests of the technocrats and that, when they are able to act on their own, they act in a way opposed to the goals set by the bureaucracy. So the technocrats are deprived not only of a share in general economic decision-making, but of the right to make important decisions relating to their own plants and their own work. In the present system, the technocrats can only be administrative and supervisory tools. Thus they cannot realize their aspirations. They agitate for decentralization of plant management on the Yugoslav model, and thereby in fact seek to change the production relationships. The slogan "The specialists to power," which is popular in these circles, expresses the managers' points of view both as to the social significance democracy would have in their kind of socialism and their antagonism toward the existing system and the ruling political bureaucracy.

Thus we see that the interests of the technocrats exceed the bounds of the present system and bring this stratum into conflict with the ruling bureaucracy. We have also seen that the system's limits deprive the overwhelming majority of the population--the workers as a whole, the majority of lower-ranking salaried employees, almost all the peasantry (with the exception of the richest peasants), and the youth--of any hope for bettering their conditions of life, and that the rapidly expanding crisis is inexorably leading to deterioration in their social and cultural conditions. In this situation, the bureaucracy cannot impose its hegemony on the other classes and social strata and finds itself without popular support.

Consequently, in order to rule it must resort to crude economic, administrative and police coercion, thereby exposing the class essence of its dictatorship. Police supervision of society grows more severe, not because it is becoming a Moloch devouring the party itself, but because antagonism toward the bureaucracy is becoming ever more acute in all segments of society; and in this situation any organization by popular forces threatens the system with extinction. The legal system of total Stalinist dictatorship--the Abridged Penal Code--has been taken out of mothballs and we are going back to a system of accusations based on Article 22 of this code ("rumors," police eavesdropping on private conversations) as well as on Article 23 of the same code (surveillance of notes and private correspondence).

By its very nature, the bureaucracy smothers popular initiative because its rule is based on the monopolization of organization in society and the destruction of independent popular forces. This tendency becomes stronger especially in periods of crisis for the system. When the various classes and social strata have no hope of improving their living conditions within the framework of the system, nor even any hope of maintaining current living standards, any genuine initiative on the people's part constantly threatens to turn against the bureaucracy, and thus constitutes a danger. Any displays of independence connected with the development of social thought and the enrichment of culture and ideological life in certain circles--discussion clubs, cultural societies, and others--are particularly subjected to strict surveillance and treated as potential dangers by the government. The same holds true for any sign of independent political and ideological activity and discussion in the most active units of the youth organization and the party. Members of the party and the Communist Youth at the university know this from their own experience.

Today the bureaucracy, no longer able to impose its hegemony on the rest of society, has no ideology of its own. Nothing has replaced the official Stalinist doctrine which was totally discredited in 1955-1957: The bureaucracy would have it that its political and economic actions are motivated by the "national interest." This national interest, when it is not the interest of the classes and groupings which make up society, can only be the state interest, that is, the interest of the class holding state power. The bureaucracy conceals its own class interest under a nationalist veneer and represents it as the general interest of the country. However, in the face of the economic crisis the nationalism proclaimed by the government has but little chance of winning the people's support. Lacking an official ideological system of even the slightest consistency, but at the same time controlling the whole of social life and all forms of ideological life in the country through its monopoly of organization, administration and police, the bureaucracy persecutes all forms of independent

ideology in the hour of general crisis. Indeed ideology is the consciousness of individuals who play an active role in society; and in crisis conditions, when the interests of an overwhelming majority of society cannot be realized within the framework of the system and are in conflict with it, all genuine social activity bound to the interests of any segment of society and all authentic ideology will turn against the bureaucracy in the long run.

The effects of this situation are particularly marked in creative intellectual circles, since their function is the scientific formulation of social thought and the artistic expression of ideology. For these circles, the crisis of ideology in society means a crisis of creativity, and any attempt to get out of the impasse, any demonstration of ideological independence in creative life, is stamped out by administrative means. Socially involved scientists, writers, and artists are quietly discriminated against by cultural and publishing policies. They are denied the use of the modern communication media and thereby prevented from practising their profession; periodicals dealing with literary and social questions which manifest even the slightest independence are suppressed and replaced by organs boycotted by the most eminent intellectuals; the increasing severity of preventive censorship is reducing the margin--already small--of professional freedom accorded the intellectuals. Thus, the ideological crisis is becoming a source of the crisis of cultural creativity.

The ideological crisis brings with it also a crisis of values and moral judgment which is particularly marked among young people at a time when they are forming their outlook on the world and the ideals on which to base their lives. This produces cynical attitudes, blatant careerism, and "hooliganism"; massive thievery is not an economic phenomenon alone.

This general crisis of social relations flows from the fact that the productive relations, on which the power of the bureaucracy is based, have become an obstacle to the development of the economy and the source of its crisis, and that all segments of society are without hope of progress or of satisfying their minimum class interests within the framework of the system. Thus, no more than the economic crisis can be overcome on the basis of present productive relations, can the general social crisis be overcome within the framework of present social relations, which only aggravate the crisis; it can be overcome only by the abolition of the prevailing production and social relationships. The only road to progress is through revolution.

In the circumstances of the system's general crisis, the bureaucracy is isolated in society. No class in society will rally to its side; at most, the rich peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie will remain neutral. But only the workers, as a result of the conditions of their life and labor, sense the need of abolishing the bureaucracy. As we have already seen, the primary sources of the economic and social crisis lie in the production relations in the heavy industry sector, that is, in the relations between the workers and the central political bureaucracy actualized in the process of production. This is why the working class must be the principal and leading force in the revolution. The revolution which will abolish the bureaucratic system, therefore, is in essence proletarian.

It is often said that the powerful state apparatus, with all of the modern means of material coercion at its command, is in itself a sufficient prop for the ruling class and enables it to maintain itself over the long run even in the



total absence of social support. The essence of this argument, despite its seemingly modern form, is a misunderstanding as old as class society and the state. In October 1956, we saw how the powerful machine of coercion in Hungary became impotent, toppled and evaporated in the space of a few days. The workers produce and transport arms, fill the ranks of the army and create the entire material power of the state. If the walls of the prisons, barracks and arsenals remain standing over long periods, it is not only because they are made of solid materials but because they are protected by the hegemony of the ruling class, the authority of the government, fear and resignation before the social order in power. The existence of these psychological walls permits the government to install itself securely behind brick walls. The social crisis strips the regime of its hegemony, its authority; it brings the overwhelming majority into conflict with it, and finally it arrays the working class against the ruling bureaucracy. The inevitable deepening of the crisis undermines the psychological walls, which are the government's real protection. A revolutionary situation causes them to collapse; and then the brick walls are no longer an obstacle. The economic and social crisis cannot be overcome within the limits of the bureaucratic system. Revolution is inevitable.

## Chapter IX

### THE INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE REVOLUTION

We are told: "We live in the center of European conflicts. The world is divided into two camps equipped with nuclear arms. In this situation, any revolutionary movement is a crime against the nation and against humanity. The very existence of Poland, which results from its position in international politics as well as its geographic location, requires us to be quiet and submit to the regime. Otherwise, we run the risk of nuclear extermination, or at best the intervention of a brother power, as happened in Hungary. In these circumstances, it is foolish and even harmful to undertake an analysis of the social structure, to think about surplus value, or to formulate political programs. To build socialism, it is first of all necessary to exist."

This is a political argument, and therefore it is important to know who propagates it and to what end. Its advocates are, first of all, the representatives of the regime themselves, although they don't always have the adroitness to dot all the i's. Next come those who are reluctant to speak about their ties with the government, but who are quite willing to hint that they are oppositionists at heart. But they preach submission to the government, and thereby take its part and speak for it. As propagandists for the system, they speak out; as hypothetical oppositionists, they hold their peace. With them, revolt goes no further than spiritual feelings. So they wind up in the role of spokesmen for the ruling bureaucracy, and thus on the side of the regime.

To put it politely, their line of argument is somewhat ambiguous: The rulers and propagandists of a system--which has at its disposal all the means of coercion and extermination--call the masses to order in the name of peace. As a typical argument from "a position of strength," such blackmail can have a logic and even be convincing. So let us calmly try to analyze this reasoning, first of all rejecting any illusion that what we are confronted with is peaceful persuasion.

1) The argument in question starts with the assumption that revolution, being the result of conspiracy pure and simple, constitutes a crime against both national and world peace. This is the traditional argument of all counter-revolutionary ideologies; it is proclaimed by all sorts of dictatorships; it is used in political trials and, thanks to this, is to a certain extent well known to the history of the workers' movement. It is an argument typical of the police mind. In reality, revolutions are always the consequence of a crisis of the economic and social structures. For this reason, they are inevitable facts of life and a recurring feature of social development. From the social standpoint, revolutions are always acts of force: Since they are directed against the class in power, they counterpose the force of the social movement to the force of the state apparatus of oppression and coercion. They are, however, struggles waged by the overwhelming majority against the rule of a minority. Therefore, they go hand in hand with political crisis and the collapse of the apparatus of coercion. Revolutions need not necessarily then take the form of an armed

struggle. The chances for averting civil war depend on the factors which limit the disorder emerging in the course of revolutionary struggle, and which paralyze the armed response of the ruling class—that is, on the forcefulness, consciousness, and organization of the revolutionary movement.

We do not stand outside history; we are subject to its laws. Revolution is an inevitable consequence of the crisis of the system, and the price society will have to pay will depend on the extent to which we are organizationally and programmatically prepared for it. The only crime against civil peace is the policy of the ruling bureaucracy, which seeks first of all to atomize the masses and to keep them politically unconscious, and then resorts to military coercion in an attempt to check the rise of revolutionary movements. Poznan and Budapest still live in our memory.

2) The Soviet-tank argument. It is said that any outbreak of revolution in Poland would surely provoke an armed intervention by the USSR with its inevitable result from the military point of view. The authors of this argument assume that all this would take place in "one country in isolation," this country being torn for exceptional reasons by class conflict, and that there would be no classes in the neighboring countries but only regular armies with a very specific number of tanks and airplanes. Thus, they assume that the revolution would have no effect beyond the frontiers of the country in which it broke out.

This most peculiar "political realism" is totally discredited by historical experience. Revolutionary crises have always had an international character--1956 was no exception to this rule. However, as we have already seen, the bureaucracy at that time had economic and social reserves at its disposal which enabled it to resolve the crisis by way of a reformist maneuver. This checked the rising tide of revolution in Poland and made it possible for the bureaucracy to avert revolutionary situations in Czechoslovakia and the USSR, thus enabling it to isolate and then crush the Hungarian revolution.

The present phase of the crisis is characterized by the lack of reserves essential for the execution of a new maneuver of that type. This holds true equally for Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary and the Soviet Union. It is hard to say in which of these countries the revolution will begin. On the other hand, it is certain that it will not stop there. The social crisis cannot be surmounted in any of these countries--except, perhaps, temporarily--by reforms and concessions. There is nothing more to reform. In these circumstances, the revolution must inevitably spread throughout the entire bloc, and the possibility of armed intervention by the Soviet bureaucracy will be determined by the gravity of the class conflicts within the USSR and not by the number of tanks and airplanes presently at its disposal.

Undoubtedly, the anti-bureaucratic revolution will shake the political stability of neo-capitalism. But it does not constitute as direct a danger for it as it does for the bureaucracy. In any case, it is hardly likely that Western imperialism, which would gladly step into the shoes of the abolished bureaucracy, will be prepared to go to the point of military intervention to accomplish this end. The workers of the developed Western countries have won a relatively large margin of democratic freedoms for themselves and society. In these conditions, wars cannot be begun without adequate preparation of public opinion. From this standpoint, an armed expedition against the countries which have

just carried out an anti-bureaucratic revolution would be impossible. It would evoke public protest, mass resistance and an active anti-war struggle led by the working class, which is a powerful, organized political force in all those countries. In addition to this, neocolonialism is faced with the threat of the colonial revolution. Lastly, a war of intervention against the anti-bureaucratic revolution runs the risk of becoming a worldwide nuclear war, which would be equivalent to suicide.

3) The atomic-bomb argument is the most recent addition to the traditional arsenal of counterrevolutionary arguments. At a time when stockpiles of nuclear arms are easily sufficient for the destruction of all life on this planet, any revolution, it seems, is a crime not only against civil peace, but also against humanity. This argument is repeated in many forms by the ruling elites of the two great blocs which share power in the world. With their arsenals overflowing with the means of nuclear extermination, the ruling circles of imperialism and the international bureaucracy call on the masses to submit in order to avoid a nuclear world war.

War is an economic undertaking; it is based on certain calculations. A nuclear war would be an aberration from the standpoint of both blocs; it would lead to the extermination of all humanity or, at best, of the principal powers, i. e., the most populous and developed parts of the world. Therefore it would be suicide. In any case, the two principal blocs do not aspire to mutual extermination. They are waging an economic, political and diplomatic competition based on the division of the world into established spheres of influence. Atomic weapons are used to blackmail revolutionary movements. However, it is well known that revolutionary wars have been developing continually in various parts of the world since the Second World War, and that at the same time, independent of this, the two main blocs possessing nuclear weapons have indulged in their policy of tensions and rapprochements. This obvious fact has been pointed out recently by the leaders of the Chinese bureaucracy, at a time when their conflict with the Soviet bureaucracy and their desire to strengthen their independence and their international position has pushed them toward an alliance with the forces of the colonial revolution.

The bureaucracy talks a lot about the necessity of safeguarding peace, by upholding the status quo, that is, staying submissive. But, whenever its rule has been threatened, it has not hesitated to resort to armed force. It hurled its tanks against the Berlin workers' demonstrations of June 1953, against those in Poznan in 1956 and in Novocherkassk in 1962; it unleashed a full-scale war against the Hungarian working class in 1956. The leaders of the imperialist countries are competing with the bureaucracy in the field of peace-loving rhetoric. But the history of the last twenty years is full of armed interventions and wars against the colonial revolution: the suppression of the liberation struggle of the Greek partisans, Korea, Algeria, Cuba, Vietnam, and finally the Congo and the most recent acts of aggression against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

It is easy to understand, therefore, why the ideological spokesmen of the ruling classes do not want us to reflect on the social causes of the war threat and why they consider "meditating on surplus value" harmful. In reality, the problem has never been so urgent as it is now. Today, the alienation of labor takes on forms which threaten the existence of mankind; the surplus

product produced by the Western workers, by the peoples exploited by imperialism, and by the Soviet workers is turned against them, not only in the classical forms of police, prisons, 'n arines' and tanks, but is turned against all humanity in the terrible form of instruments of nuclear extermination.

Growing social conflicts within the antipopular dictatorships are at the root of the war danger and the development of these conflicts goes hand in hand with the crisis in the world domination of these dictatorships. This is true, first of all of imperialism which, no longer able to maintain its rule over the underdeveloped countries, steps up its wars of intervention and its adventuristic, "brink-of-war" political maneuvers. But this is true also of the international bureaucracy. We remember the 1961 Berlin crisis, the perilous undertaking of installing Soviet missiles in Cuba, which put the Cuban Revolution in danger. We remember Soviet tanks in action in Berlin in 1953 and the intervention--an actual war--against the Hungarian Revolution. The ruling circles of both great blocs are doubtless aware that a nuclear war on a world scale would be an insane adventure. This, however, does not prevent them from producing and stockpiling nuclear arms, which serve them as instruments of political blackmail. Thus, it is their rule which causes and aggravates national and international crises, multiplies tensions, conflicts and counterrevolutionary wars, thereby endangering all mankind.

Any disarray in the revolutionary movements throughout the world strengthens the antipopular dictatorships and adds to the likelihood of armed intervention on their part; this gives the process an uncontrolled dynamic and thus contributes to the threat of war. The danger of war cannot be definitively eliminated as long as its social roots--imperialism and the dictatorship of the bureaucracy--continue to exist. An organized revolutionary movement, conscious of its objectives, offers humanity the hope of curbing this danger for the present and of eliminating it in the future.

4) The bureaucracy and the world revolutionary movement. The young Soviet republic was able to defend itself successfully against the intervention of the imperialist countries thanks to the struggles of the Western working class and to the revolutionary wave which swept the world toward the end of the First World War, following the victory of the Russian Revolution. The subsequent development of Soviet Russia as a workers' state depended on the outcome of the revolutionary struggles being waged in the other countries and, above all, in the industrialized countries of Western Europe. Lenin, Trotsky and the other Bolshevik leaders were perfectly aware of this situation. They knew that only another revolution could be a genuine ally for the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus, in this period, the ideology and foreign policy of Soviet Russia had an internationalist character.

As the Soviet state became bureaucratized and the new government was transformed into that of a ruling class, the situation changed. The revolutionary movement lost its natural role as the ally of the Soviet Union. As long as it remained subordinated to the directives of the Soviet bureaucracy, it could be used for barter--as a tool in the service of the interests of the Soviet state (that is, of the interests of the ruling bureaucracy) in its rivalry with the imperialist bloc. The stabilization of capitalism and the ebbing of the revolutionary tide in the West, contributed to the bureaucratization of the Communist parties and helped to bring them under the thumb of the Soviet Communist Party. In practice this meant subordinating the interests of the workers and the revolu-

tion in the capitalist countries to the immediate diplomatic interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. We know what consequences this had.

Conversely, the victory of any independent revolution is a danger to the bureaucracy. By its very nature such a revolution occurs as a sovereign act of the popular masses. As a result, its contagious ideas and example threaten the bureaucracy's hegemony over its own masses. Furthermore, victorious revolutions do not submit to the dictates of the Soviet bureaucracy, thus upsetting the monolithism of its international domination and threatening its internal monolithism as well.

The first victory of an independent revolution following World War II took place in Yugoslavia. The second country was China. We know the consequences. This is why the Soviet bureaucracy acts according to the principle: "Socialism shall go no further than our army." In consonance with this principle, it tried at first to bring the Spanish Revolution under the control of its leaders and its police; then, later, on the same principle, it betrayed the revolution. It forbade the Italian and French Communists to wage a revolutionary struggle for power during the revolutionary situation which prevailed in the years 1945-1946. It betrayed the revolution in Greece. It tried to pressure the Chinese Communists into giving up their struggle against Chiang Kai-shek's army.

The liberation of a large group of countries from capitalist domination was--and still is--a factor favoring revolutionary struggles against imperialism. However, the bureaucracy of these countries is an obstacle to the development of the colonial revolution and to the workers' struggle in the economically developed capitalist countries. The bureaucracy opposes anticapitalist revolution through its foreign policy, which is based on dividing the world between itself and imperialism into spheres of influence and on its desire to safeguard the status quo; through its ideology which justifies this policy; and finally through its influence over the official Communist parties. However, the colonial revolution is getting out of its control. More than once, revolutions in the colonial world have been successfully organized and led by groups outside the official Communist parties--as in Cuba and Algeria, for example.

The international bureaucracy's ability to control the world communist movement is also undergoing a crisis which must inevitably worsen. It is not by chance that the emergence of this crisis coincided with the beginnings of the crisis in our camp and with the first anti-bureaucratic revolutions in Poland and Hungary.

The struggle against the dictatorship of the bureaucracy helps the world workers' movement to liberate itself from the bureaucracy's tutelage. The victorious anti-bureaucratic revolution will put an end to this tutelage. It is the natural ally of the world revolutionary movement.

## Chapter X

### PROGRAM

We have shown that revolution is the gravedigger of the old society. At the same time, it is the creator of the new. The question now before us is whether the working class, which by its very nature is the principal and leading force of revolution, is capable of offering a valid program.

This would be true if the program is advanced by the social class whose particular interest is most in accord with the needs of economic development and satisfaction of the needs of other classes and social layers--in other words, whose program permits the realization of the interests of society as a whole. The class interest of the workers requires the end of bureaucratic ownership of the means of production. This doesn't mean that workers' wages must be equal to the total value of the product of their labor. The level of development of productive forces in modern society creates the necessity of a division of labor permitting the existence of nonproductive sectors supported by the material product of the workers.

Under workers' democracy it will also be necessary to deduct a part of the labor product for accumulation, to sustain and develop health services, education and culture; still another part will be allotted for social benefits, administration and government. But all of this will be carried out only to the extent that the working class considers it necessary in its own interests. In reality, exploitation does not consist in the fact that workers' wages represent only a part of the value produced, but in the fact that surplus product is taken away from them and used for ends which are foreign and antagonistic to them; the nonproductive sectors serve to maintain and reinforce the domination of the bureaucracy (or the bourgeoisie as well) over production, over society and the life of the working class. The end of exploitation means the creation of a system where the organized working class will be the master of its labor and its labor product; where it will determine the goal of social production; where it will determine the division of the national product. It will manage the extent and direction of investments, of expenditures for social benefits, health services, education and culture, the budget of the government apparatus, and the actual duties of this apparatus. Then the working class will exercise economic, social and political power in the state.

1) The present level of productivity implies a social division of labor in which the function of production is separate from that of management. There must be workers and managers. In the process of production, the working class is not destined to manage but to produce. In order to manage, it must organize itself and be organized by its state.

If there is no workers' democracy in the factory, there can be still less in the state. In fact, it is only in the plant that workers are in their own element; it is there that they exercise their essential social function. If the workers are slaves to their labor, then freedom outside work is only "freedom on Sun-

days," that is, fictional freedom. The working class cannot be the master of its work and of production if it does not have control over the conditions and goals of its work in the factories. To this end, it must organize itself in the plants by forming workers' councils to manage the factories. It must make the manager a subordinate functionary to the council, supervised, hired and fired by it.

Today, all key administrative decisions in the factories are dictated by the central government. Under such conditions, workers' councils lack any power in practice. The manager is linked by his very nature to the leading bodies and therefore to the central apparatus of economic administration. Under these conditions, the workers' councils take on the character of secondary managerial bodies, comparable to the Autonomous Workers' Conferences. In order for the councils to be able to manage the factories, workers must make them independent of the factories. This would establish the preliminary conditions for workers' democracy and, at the same time, give new directives for the realization of the true class goals of production. (As we have already shown in Chapter III, centralization is necessary for organization of the means of production sector, while the production of consumers' goods requires decentralization.)

In this way, the working class, by taking the first steps of its program, would achieve in passing what is quite progressive in the program of the technocrats: the independence of factories. However, the working class and the technocracy give totally different social contents to this concept. For the technocrats, independence of factories places all power in the hands of management. For the workers, it means independence of the working class. This is why they cannot limit themselves to management of the factories through the intermediary of councils. It would only amount to carrying out the program of the technocrats and thereby submitting the workers to a new yoke.

Major decisions concerning the division and use of the national revenue by definition have a general economic character, that is, they are made at the level of the national economy--they can be made only by a central government. If decisions made by the government remain outside the control of the working class, it cannot direct production and consequently its own labor. Workers' autonomy limited to factories would inevitably become a fiction to mask the power of plant management and the domination of a new bureaucracy politically linked to the technocracy in the state apparatus. Then exploitation would continue and the old disorder would repeat itself in a new form.

2) This is why it is necessary for the working class to organize, in addition to workers' councils in factories, delegations from plants throughout the country. That is, it must organize councils of workers' deputies with a central council of deputies at their head. Under this system of councils, the working class would set the goals of social production, would make the necessary decisions, and supervise carrying out the plan at every step. At each level the councils would become the instruments of economic, political, executive and legislative authority. They would be truly elective bodies for the voters, organized on the basis of factories. Voters would be able to recall their representatives and replace them at any moment, without regard to regular election dates. Workers' delegations would become the framework of the proletarian state.



3) If workers' delegates in the central council of deputies had before them only a single project for the distribution of national income presented by the government or by the leadership of a single party, their role would be limited to that of a perfunctory vote. As we have shown in Chapter I, monopolistic power cannot have a proletarian character. That automatically becomes a dictatorship over the working class, a bureaucratic organization serving to atomize workers and keep them and all of society in subjection.

In order for the system of councils to become the expression of the will, of the thinking, of the activity of the working masses, the working class must organize itself into more than one party. What does a plurality of parties mean in practice? The right of every political group recognized by the working class to publish its own newspaper, to present its program via the modern information media, to organize cadres, to carry on political campaigns--in brief, to be a party. The existence of more than one workers' party requires freedom of speech, press, assembly, the end of preventive censorship, complete freedom of scientific research, of literary and artistic creation. Without freedom of expression for different currents of thought in the press, in scientific research, in literary and artistic experimentation, without complete freedom to create, there is no workers' democracy.

With the existence of more than one workers' party, the different parties would present their proposals for the division of the national income in the central council of deputies; then the conditions would be created which would permit the real elements of an electoral program to emerge; it would benefit both the central representatives of the workers, and the masses, who elect and recall delegates. A plurality of workers' parties does not however imply that access to these parties would be limited to workers alone. The proletarian character of the parties would reflect the nature of the state power organized on the basis of councils. Then parties seeking to exercise influence on the political power could not do so except by winning over the working masses.

For the same reasons, we oppose parliamentary regimes. The experience of the last twenty years shows that they are no guarantee against dictatorship and that, even in the most perfect forms, they are not governments of the people. In the parliamentary system, the parties only fight to be elected: The moment the vote is cast, the electoral platforms can be thrown into the wastebasket. In parliament, the deputies feel themselves bound only to the party leadership which named them as candidates. Voters are grouped in arbitrary election districts according to purely formal criteria. This atomizes them. The right to recall deputies is a complete fiction. Participation of citizens in political life amounts to nothing more than reading statements of the leaders in the press, listening to them on the radio, and seeing them on TV--and, once every four or five years, voting to choose the party to govern them. The rest takes place by virtue of a mandate, without the voters' participation. Furthermore, parliaments only exercise legislative power. The executive apparatus holds the only real power, the power over those who control the material force, that is, the power over surplus value.

Therefore the parliamentary system is one in which the working class and the entire society finds itself deprived of all influence on government--by virtue of voting. To formal voting every four or five years, we counterpose the permanent participation of the working class, organized in a system of councils, political parties and unions: Workers would assume the correction and

supervision of political and economic decisions at all levels.

In the capitalist system, the bourgeoisie, which controls the surplus value, is above parliament. In the bureaucratic system, the untrammelled rule of the central political bureaucracy lies behind the parliamentary fiction. In the system of workers' democracy, if representation of the entire body of citizens takes a parliamentary form, the working class will be above parliament, organized in councils and controlling the material base of the existence of society, namely the product of labor.

4) The working class cannot decide on the division of the labor product directly; it can only do so through its central political representation. Furthermore, the working class is not absolutely homogeneous in regard to its class interests. Conflicts between the decisions of workers' delegations and the interests and tendencies of workers in particular factories and particular sectors of the working class are inevitable. The mere fact of separation between management and production holds within it the possibility of the development of an elected power with a certain amount of independence, and this holds true as much at the factory level as at the state. If workers were deprived--above and beyond the right to vote--of the possibility of self-defense against the decisions of their representational system, the system would degenerate and act against the interests of those it is supposed to represent. If the working class were deprived of the possibility of defending itself against the state, workers' democracy would become a fiction. The possibility of defense must be guaranteed by trade unions absolutely independent of the state with the right to organize economic and political strikes. The different political parties would fight to maintain the proletarian character of trade unions in seeking to exert influence over them.

5) In order that the organs of workers' democracy not be turned into a facade behind which all "the old crap" will reappear, it is necessary that the forms of democracy correspond to the vital content of the activity of the working masses. For administrators, specialists and politicians, public affairs is a profession. They have the time and knowledge necessary for it. The worker is an agent in the process of production. His profession is attending to a machine. In order for him to be able to take part in public life, it is indispensable to give him a minimum of time and education.

To this end, several hours per week taken out of the regular paid work must be devoted to the general education of workers. In these hours, the workers, organized according to the units of production, would discuss the variants of the national economic plan, the regional plans and the factory plans proposed by the different political parties. These affairs are only too difficult, if not unintelligible, when attempts are made to hide the class meanings of the division of national income. The representatives of the different political parties taking part in workers' education periods would bring the working class closer to their programs and their programs closer to the working class.

6) Under a workers' democracy, political police and regular (standing) armies cannot be maintained in any form. The anti-democratic character of political police is obvious. However a plethora of myths has been created around the concept of a regular army of the dominant class, myths accepted to a certain degree by all of society.

What is a regular army? It is an organization within which hundreds of

thousands of young men torn from their natural surroundings are isolated in barracks, where all independence of thought is driven out of their heads by brutal methods, teaching them to carry out mechanically any order coming from the hierarchical and professional command structure. It is this organization which is the basis of the armed force of the state. This force, separated from society, is conditioned to come into conflict with it at any time. And it is for this reason that it is not enough to change the officers. The regular army, like the political police, is in its very essence an instrument of anti-popular dictatorship. As long as it is maintained, a clique of generals can always elevate itself above any party or council.

It is said that regular armies are indispensable for the defense of nations. This is true under an anti-popular dictatorship where it is difficult to force the great masses to fight to defend a state which does not belong to them; this can only be attained by intimidation and terror supported by the regular army. Arming the masses outside the framework of this organization represents a mortal danger to the system; it is why regular armies are the only way dictatorship can organize the armed forces.

However the examples of the revolutionary wars in Vietnam, Algeria and Cuba show that armed workers and peasants--when they know why they are fighting and identify their interests with those of the revolution--are in no way inferior to regular armies. This is true above all for small countries prey to the counterrevolutionary aggression of foreign powers; when they are attacked by a regular army they can only defend themselves effectively by the methods of people's war. Regular armies are necessary to the aggressors for their colonial wars and interventions; they are necessary for anti-popular dictatorships to keep the masses in subjection. This is most obviously the case in Latin America where armies play the role of internal police. But it is equally true everywhere armies exist, and it is the same in Poland, as the Poznan events show. Regular armies, whether clashes occur or not, are instruments of brutal domination over the working class and society, just as a bludgeon is an instrument for beating whether or not its owner uses it. In a workers' democracy, the regular army would not impede counterrevolution. On the contrary, it might become a counter-revolutionary instrument itself. Consequently, it must be liquidated.

In order to make it impossible to overturn its democratic rule, nevertheless, the working class must be armed. This is particularly true for workers in mass industry who must everywhere be organized into workers' militias subordinate to the councils. Military specialists must act as instructors responsible and subordinate to the councils. In this way, the military repressive force of the state will be linked closely to the workers who will always be ready to defend their power and their revolution arms in hand.

For technical reasons, it is important to maintain permanent specialized units (missiles, air forces, a fleet, etc.). However soldiers of these units must be recruited from workers in given factories in mass industry and during their service they must remain in contact with the workers of their plants, and keep the rights due workers.

7) Agricultural production and the peasantry play too important a role in the economy and in society for the workers' program to neglect the question of the countryside.

Unquestionably, the future of the peasantry resides in large industrialized and specialized state enterprises. The technical base of this organization of agricultural production necessitates rural industrialization; it requires substantial investment only realizable over a long period of time. Under present technical and economic conditions, any attempt at general collectivization would mean the expropriation of the peasants which would have to be carried out against them by a police dictatorship. It would result in a drop in agricultural production and a return to the system of police dictatorship against the working class. Such a collectivization would be consonant only with the bureaucratic system. For workers' democracy it would mean death; it is unacceptable.

The present agricultural structure, in which there is private land ownership, results in the establishment of farms of the capitalist type, provided the laws of the market operate freely, without any limitations. Because they are scattered, these small holdings have small investment resources although investment is essential to their development, and consequently the major part of investment comes from the largest farms. Rationalization of agriculture would therefore signify a profound crisis: bankruptcy of the poorest peasants and a lack of opportunities and declassment of the small peasantry.

For the factory workers, this would mean an increase in basic-necessity prices and unemployment. Such a development is acceptable to the technocrats (the natural partisans of the tendency toward concentration in agriculture), but it is unacceptable to a democratic workers' state.

8) The productive goal of the working class is to develop the consumption capacity of the immense masses who have nothing today but the bare minimum. As we have already shown in Chapter VI, the bureaucracy lowers the consumption of the majority of peasantry below the bare minimum; it deprives the peasant economy of its surplus and the peasants of opportunities for development because it tends to reduce the real cost of labor power as much as possible and treats social consumption as a necessary evil.

The working class has an interest in eliminating the type of relationship which exists between the state and peasantry. The interests of the workers demand rational development of agricultural production (the basis of consumption) by the development of the mass of small and middle individual holdings and the corresponding increase of their investment and consumption possibilities. It is precisely this that makes the working class the spokesman of the interests of the majority of the peasants and at the same time establishes the basis of a real alliance between them.

To realize the common interests of the workers and the immense majority of peasants it is necessary:

First, to close the price scissors artificially maintained by the bureaucratic regime depriving the small and middle-size peasant holdings of the material basis for their development; and in addition, to establish a progressive tax on the most powerful enterprises.

Second, to utilize that part of the peasant labor product appropriated by the state in the form of taxes or any other form (deducting the peasants' share in the maintenance of the administration), in order to return to the countryside the social and cultural investments and economic and technical assistance neces-

sary in the first place to increase the productivity of the small and very small peasant holdings.

To this end, the peasantry must organize itself in accordance with its economic bases, and provide itself with political representation. It must create its own producers' organizations. This is key to opening up opportunities for the 60 per cent of the peasantry which is vegetating on small holdings and which represents a surplus labor force; at the same time, a glut of industrial investments must not be permitted.

This requires that this excess labor force be used for supplementary intensive production: stockraising, truckfarming and fruit growing. But this is very difficult, and it is impossible to create an industry capable of carrying out this transformation with the dispersed forces of the small peasant enterprises. Prerequisite to success is the creation of associations of individual small and middle-sized enterprises which would have a sufficient labor force. These associations, as a result of the land they would have at their disposal, of the co-operative work which they would permit, and with state aid (low-interest rate loans, state participation in small investments, state transport, etc.), would put in service small transitional enterprises and would organize distribution and sale. This is the most economic way of increasing the production of food products which are lacking today, of overcoming the underdevelopment of the consumers' goods industry, and of increasing the productivity of small and very small holdings, employing the surplus labor on the spot.

The conditions must be created on peasant enterprises for specialized production, without which economic rationality is impossible. At the same time, in their contacts with the state purchasing bodies, the peasant producers must organize themselves for defense against any artificial lowering of prices. The isolated peasant, who concludes "free" contracts with the state, is powerless in the face of its monopoly of the market. This is why, independently of the creation of producers' organizations, the peasants must create their own general organization for distribution and sale. With relationships like this existing, the strongest enterprises, which are few in number but which play an important role by reason of their size and their economic power, would no longer have the opportunity of transforming themselves into capitalist farms; they would lack the labor and the cheap land resulting from the ruin of the weakest enterprises. But the strongest enterprises could increase their production by virtue of their own investment resources or to the extent they succeeded in replacing the labor they lack by mechanization.

Since industry is the decisive sector of the economy, the directions taken in the development of industrial production set the general lines of development for the entire economy. In controlling the product of its labor, the working class will determine the general framework of the development of other sectors and consequently also of the peasant sector. But in the general framework of the whole economy, determined by the level, the organization, and the development of industrial production, the peasantry must have control over the product of its labor. Plans for the development of the countryside, the use of rural social and cultural investment funds, cannot be presented unilaterally to the peasantry by the state. In this case, in fact, power over the peasantry would be exercised by a well-developed separate apparatus, which in practice would be exempt from the control of the working class and might even impose its own control over it.

The convergence of the interests of the working class and the majority of peasants permits the political autonomy of the peasantry, autonomy which is also a necessity of workers' democracy. The economic organizations of the peasantry we spoke of above will not be adequate to assure control of that part of their product which is delivered to the state and which must be returned to them in the form of various kinds of immediate financial investments and economic aid. This can only be accomplished by a political representation of the peasant producers at the national level established with the aid of the economic organizations and of peasant political parties. Consequently, the working class is profoundly interested in an independence of the peasant movement permitting representation of the interests of the majority of peasants, rather than only that of the narrow layer of the most powerful proprietors.

9) We do not consider the anti-bureaucratic revolution to be an exclusively Polish affair. The economic and social contradictions which we have analyzed have ripened in all the industrialized bureaucratic countries, in Czechoslovakia, in the German Democratic Republic, in Hungary and in the Soviet Union.

Nor do we consider the revolution to be the exclusive affair of the working class of the bureaucratic dictatorships. The bureaucratic system identified with socialism by the official propaganda of the East and West, comprises socialism in the eyes of the popular masses of the developed capitalist countries.

The international bureaucracy and its leading force--the Soviet bureaucracy--fears all genuine revolutionary movements in the world because they threaten the monolithism of its system on an international scale as well as the internal monolithism which permits it to exercise its dictatorship over its own working class. Desiring international and internal stabilization on the basis of the world division into spheres of influence with capitalism, the bureaucracy smothers revolutionary movements on its own territory, and by means of its influence on the international Communist parties, holds back the development of movements in Latin America, Asia and Africa. The anti-bureaucratic revolution is the affair of the international revolutionary movement and of all the movements in favor of colonial revolution, in Africa, in Asia and in Latin America. It is part of the world revolutionary movement.

Like all revolutions, it threatens the established order and it is menaced by the forces which defend this order. The international bureaucracy, to the degree it is strong enough, will try to smother the victorious revolution in the first countries where it occurs. Western imperialism will try to profit from our revolution by replacing bureaucratic dictatorship with a dictatorship of the capitalist monopolies, which is hardly an improvement.

Our ally against the intervention of the Soviet tanks is the Russian working class, the Ukrainian, the Hungarian and the Czech. Our ally against the pressure and threats of imperialism is the working class of the industrialized West and the rising colonial revolution in the underdeveloped countries. Against the collusion between the international bureaucracy and the international imperialist bourgeoisie, we raise the historic slogan of proletarian class struggle: "Workers of the World, Unite!"

The working class must carry out all these revolutions in all domains, political, economic and social, in order to realize its class goals, to control

its own work and the products of its own labor. Is its program valid?

In taking the first steps to realize it, that is, in giving autonomy to the enterprises, the working class creates the necessary conditions for adapting production to needs, the end of the waste of economic surplus, the utilization of the intensive factors of economic growth. The technocrats would do the same. But the productive goal of the working class is consumption on the broadest social basis and not the luxurious consumption of privileged layers. This is why the rule of the working class over production assures in the most decisive way the overcoming of the principal economic contradiction which today stands in the way of economic and social progress: the contradiction between the productive potential already developed and the actual low level of social consumption. As a result, the relations of production based on workers' democracy open up the broadest perspectives for the development of the economy and society. By their unique class interest, the workers represent at the same time the economic interest of the mass of poorly paid white collar workers and the small and middle peasantry, in other words, the overwhelming majority of the rural and urban population.

The enslavement of the working class is the principal source of the enslavement of other classes and social layers; in liberating itself, the working class liberates all of society.

In order to liberate itself, it must do away with the political police, thereby liberating society from dictatorship and fear;

--It must do away with the regular army, thereby liberating soldiers from the brutalization of barrack life;

--It must institute the plurality of parties, thereby giving political freedom to all society;

--It must eliminate preventive censorship, introduce total freedom of the press, of scientific and cultural creation, of the creation of diverse currents of social thought, thereby liberating the writer, the artist and the journalist, and creating the conditions under which the intelligentsia can realize in the fullest way its proper social function;

--It must subject the administrative apparatus to constant control by and permanent responsibility to its democratic organizations, that is, change the prevailing relationships inside this apparatus, thereby liberating the simple functionary from feudal and humiliating dependence on the bureaucratic hierarchy;

--It must guarantee the peasantry control over its production and economic, social and political autonomy, thereby freeing the peasants from their lot of being eternally powerless subjects of every government, to become active citizens, organized and participating in the decisions which determine the conditions of their life and work.

In the process of production, workers occupy the most ungratifying position. That is why the working class more than any other class in society needs democracy; any denial of democracy rebounds first against the workers.

Workers' democracy is socially the broadest form of government and creates the best conditions for the full development of society.

The specific class interest of the workers then corresponds best to the needs of economic development and consequently represents in the most complete way all the interests of society. The program of the working class is therefore valid. Will it be realized?

That depends on the state of ideological and organizational preparation of the workers at the moment of revolutionary crisis and thus on what those who consider the program of workers' democracy their own, do today.



## Chapter XI

### COUNTER ARGUMENTS

In the concluding chapter ("What Is To Be Done?") of our document, we listed, among others, the present and future political and social tendencies against which the workers must polemicize and fight politically, namely, the technocracy, i. e., "the socialism of the plant managers"; the farmers party, i. e., "the socialism of the efficient farmers"; and the petty-bourgeoisie, i. e., "Christian Democracy."

This point, as well as our program and the chapter "What Is To Be Done?" itself, evoked serious objections. We shall now try to reply to these objections.

The first of these objections deals with our attitude toward the technocracy. The "socialism of the plant managers" does not change the workers' position in the production process—it preserves exploitation; therefore, it is only a new form of dictatorship over the workers, the majority of the peasants and the intellectuals. We do not oppose it out of any self-interest, but because we have consciously chosen the other side of the barricades. In addition, we have been reproached for having chosen the road of proletarian revolution, when, we are told, the technocrats' program is also a solution to the crisis and can be realized, moreover, by a combination of pressure from the bottom and reform from the top—that is, without revolution and the dangers which flow from it.

Let us note at the outset that the supporters of this view have also chosen their side of the barricades and, therefore, that we are arguing from opposite standpoints. Moreover, although they use so-called realistic arguments, we hold that they are utopians. In Yugoslavia, the technocratic system did not displace an already full-blown bureaucratic system, but emerged directly from the postrevolutionary fluidity of social and political relations within a specific international context and the resulting economic needs.

One could hold that all the conditions were present in Poland in 1956–1957 for the application of a technocratic reform, which would have brought a solution to the crisis and lasting stability. However, the bureaucracy did not permit it.

We believe that such a reform was unacceptable to it for two reasons. First, the bureaucracy is a fully developed ruling class and it defended the productive relations on which its rule is based by all means possible. It has already been clearly demonstrated in Chapter 3 that technocratic reform entails changing the productive relationships. If this argument seems anachronistic to "the Marxists of a yesteryear," we point to a second equally important reason.

We live in the era of the universal crisis of the system, when the position of the ruling class is shaken by the tension and ripening of class antagonisms. Technocratic reform involves the confrontation of social forces, political struggle for power, an acute political crisis and an enlargement--if only for a brief period--of political freedoms. Moreover, if the plants were independent, the workers would no longer be confronted with the anonymous power of the state but with the plant management whom they know well. At the level of class struggle reached in 1956, this would probably have led to a further development of the revolution and the fall of the bureaucratic regime.

If the bureaucracy did not opt for such a reform when the system still possessed economic reserves and the new leadership still enjoyed an unchallenged authority, it is all the more incapable of doing so now. Indeed, it has neither the reserves, i. e., the material base necessary for a reformist maneuver, nor the authority or social support. This reform was not put into practice eight years ago, and they have no intention of doing so today despite the obvious symptoms of economic crisis. In any case, this is fact which not only Marxists but even simple realists must take account of.

It is possible that "the socialism of the managers" will come about, but it will not avert the revolution. It can only triumph with the revolution or in its wake; in relation to workers' democracy it would represent a sort of "Thermidor." We do not see why we should fight for such a solution; to the contrary, in the chapter on program, we tried to discover the means to prevent it.

We have also been accused of blindness in speaking of the necessity of the revolutionary road and told that this road can only end in the triumph of anti-socialist forces, either because the working class is reactionary in its mass, or because the bourgeois elements in society are so powerful. The same objection is made to the other measures we propose, such as plurality of parties, abolition of the political police, etc.

Let us note that the authors of this argument have also chosen their side of the barricades. They want, in fact, to defend the present system, which they call socialist, against the working class, which they call anti-socialist. In this argument, the bureaucracy has been identified with socialism and the defense of its class rule over the masses is presented as defending socialism.

We believe that this question must be seen from the completely opposite perspective, and we tried to show that in the analytical part of our document. The ruling bureaucracy is an anti-proletarian force, and therefore anti-socialist. It is the most potent reactionary force itself because it has political power and rules over production. Elements of the traditional right have no base in the key sectors of the economy--industry, construction, transportation, banking. Petty-bourgeois elements--"private enterprise" in the urban sectors and so-called kulak farms in the countryside--are marginal to the economy and to the organization of society. On the other hand, considerable importance must be accorded to politically right-wing groupings and currents headed by the church hierarchy, which hang on to the old catchwords of reactionary ideology.

The bureaucratic system evokes the just protests and hatred of the

masses; it is identified with socialism and it mercilessly stamps out all opposition from the left. In this way, favorable conditions are created for the spread of right-wing ideology among the masses. In fact, the people are waiting for ideological rallying cries to express their protest against the exploitative and dictatorial system; and since there is no left opposition to express their fundamental interests, they turn toward the old catchwords of the traditional right. Thus, the bureaucratic and reactionary dictatorship favours the traditional political right. Moreover, the bureaucracy establishes collaborative agreements with certain of these tendencies (PAX), and compromise arrangements with others, such as the church hierarchy.

The only effective way to combat the traditional right, therefore, is not to defend the bureaucratic dictatorship but to fight it and consistently expose it from a left position. The workers' program does not depend on vague catchwords but on social realities. It is in fundamental opposition to the dictatorship of the bureaucracy and in harmony with the vital interests of the masses. Its analysis and proposals go to the root of the problem and this gives it an obvious advantage over the nationalist and clerical rhetoric of the right and assures it of the possibility of winning the support of the masses. The struggle against the traditional right and the struggle against the right in power are inseparable.

Our answer to those who imagine that workers' democracy opens up the way to power for the forces of the right, because it accepts a plurality of parties and renounces the use of such instruments as the political police, is that we are not talking about a state above classes but about working-class democracy.

Under workers' democracy, the representatives of the workers in the plants would constitute the political and economic authority; therefore, the working class would be the decisive element in the confrontation of political parties. There would also be an organization with the power to coerce—the workers' militia. Contrary to the present system, under workers' democracy the military and repressive forces of the state would not be arrayed against the working class, but closely linked to it. We believe that all these measures taken together give the working class the key position in the state and serve as a safeguard against the right. We shall not bother to discuss the position which holds that the working class in Poland is a reactionary force; because that position expresses nothing but anti-proletarian class consciousness. Our program has also drawn other criticisms in university circles: that we demand all power for the workers to the exclusion of the rest of society, that our program is anti-intellectual, and that it is not "up to date."

We are sure that those making these criticisms can't be dreaming of that "state of all the people," which exists nowhere and, in all probability, will never exist anywhere but in the program of the CPSU, as their ideal of "modernity."

This criticism must, therefore, be based on the fact that we have not yet discussed the forms which the political representation of society as a whole will take. It is, in fact, difficult to predict the details of political and legal organization in the coming society. We have not written the constitution of the new state; we have written a political program. It was natural that we include in it only those elements essential to the nature of workers' democracy. We tried to answer only the question of how workers must organize themselves

and organize the state power in order to realize their fundamental interest: control of their own labor and its product, i. e., the abolition of exploitation.

Since the industrial sector plays the decisive role in the economy, control of industrial production, that is, of the workers' labor, is equivalent in modern society to class rule and political power. As long as groups of people continue to be set apart by the place they occupy in the productive process, by their material and social positions, or by their special interests, parliament, or any other form representation of the entire society may take, will uphold the power of the class exercising real control over the labor process and division of the labor product in the key sectors of the economy. This is why the workers must take state power in order to put an end to their exploitation. Therefore, all those objections which indict workers' democracy for its class character make no sense. It can only be criticized for being proletarian; but obviously only another class with pretensions to power could do that.

If this "modern society"--with which we are insufficiently acquainted and which our opponents counterpose to workers' democracy--is neither bureaucratic dictatorship nor neocapitalism, it must be the technocratic system. We still do not see the basis for the conviction that intellectuals would play a more important role in such a system than in workers' democracy. As long as exploitation survives, the necessity will remain for police, administrative and propagandistic means of maintaining it. This does not mean merely the existence of political police, but entails relegating science and culture to the role of apologetics as well. Any system based on enslaving the workers deprives intellectuals of their freedom in one way or another. Only the emancipation of the workers can change this state of affairs. By its very nature, workers' democracy can offer the intellectuals much greater freedom than is possible in the most parliamentary of bourgeois republics or the most "modern" of managerial kingdoms.

Economic and social development in the long run is leading to the disappearance of differences between productive and nonproductive labor, between intellectual and manual labor, and between industrial and agricultural labor. This is in harmony with the hopes and desires of the workers. However, the road to the communist society, which will abolish wage labor and the exploitation of the producers which necessarily results from it, goes through workers' democracy. We have not written a vision of the communist society of the Twenty-first Century; in this respect, we would have little to add to what Marx wrote. We have tried, instead, to present the first draft of a program of workers' democracy for the second half of the Twentieth Century.

In general, the most violent attacks against us have come in connection with the practical proposals for strike action and forming workers' circles--the nuclei of the future party--contained in the chapter, "What Is To Be Done?" Although the official reporters distorted our analysis and scarcely mentioned our program, they quoted extensively from the last chapter in order to arouse indignation against our declared intentions to violate the penal code, and thereby relieved us of the necessity of giving a detailed presentation of this chapter. Therefore, we will limit ourselves to explaining the reasons for our point of view and to answering the objections which have been raised.

We believe that the economic and social crisis is leading inexorably toward revolution. The bureaucracy's power is no longer rooted in the support

of society but in the disorganized state of social forces, kept thus primarily by force, and in the atomization of the working class, deprived of party and program.

Revolution is indispensable to the development of society; and it is inevitable. However, the development of the revolution and its outcome depend first on the extent to which the workers are organizationally and programmatically prepared for it. The degree to which the disorder bound up with revolution can be curtailed depends primarily on this, and thus also the chances for its peaceful evolution and minimization of the social costs involved. The working class cannot play a leading role in the revolution if it lacks its own organization and program. At most it might raise nonproletarian forces, that is, its new oppressors, to power.

Clearly then the transformation of the working class into a class "for itself," an organized force conscious of its own aims, is in the interest both of this class and of social development. This transformation can only be the result of conscious activity; and we believe that it is the political and moral duty of all who want to fight for the interests of the working class to engage in this activity.

We believe that this activity must center around formulating a program expressing the combined interests of the working class and educating the workers along these lines so that the working class will become conscious of its goals--through discussion about the program and through uniting the workers in struggle for the defense of their immediate interests, i. e., in strike movements. This process leads to the organization of the workers in their own parties and trade unions.

There has been an uproar against us because it is said that such a perspective implies illegal activity; in other words, that it is in violation of the existing laws. But let us call things by their right names--neither strikes, formulation of programs, nor discussion are legally forbidden. However, it is certainly true that the penal code on the books--which was created or kept from earlier days by the bureaucracy--permits police prosecution of such activities.

The codes in force in Poland are the Penal Code of 1932, the instrument of the semi-fascist dictatorship of the National Renewal (Sanacja) period, and the Abridged Penal Code, the instrument of the totalitarian Stalinist dictatorship. These two codes, most of all the Abridged Code, are so vague and elastic that they impose virtually no restrictions on repressive activity by the government and give it a free hand. Thus, all the authority of the law can be brought to bear against the organizers of strikes, though strikes are not forbidden; against those taking part in discussions, though discussion is permitted; against the authors of personal letters, though everyone writes letters.

But since we are discussing questions of law, let us recall that the fundamental law is the Constitution. The penal codes, in particular the Abridged Penal Code, are in flagrant contradiction to it; but since the Constitution is still in force, it takes precedence over them. Preventive censorship is unconstitutional along with all measures which suppress freedom of speech, publication and assembly. The bureaucratic regime itself is unconstitutional. From the constitutional point of view, strikes, political discussion, formulation of

programs and organizing workers do not challenge present laws, but they do challenge the legitimacy of the regime.

Our actions are motivated not merely by constitutional considerations but by our commitment to the struggle for the emancipation of the working class and of society. Since we have been accused of illegal activity, however, we had to show that the law itself is interpreted arbitrarily by the regime and its defenders--they call whatever suits their purposes legally binding. Thus, what we are accused of is not, in fact, illegal activity, but activity contravening the arbitrary dictates of the bureaucratic regime. That type of morality which tolerates exclusively what the regime deigns to authorize, thus making submission the greatest of all virtues, is alien to us because of our involvement in the struggle and the traditions to which we lay claim.

The outlawed Polish Communist Party fought against the arbitrary decrees of the bourgeois government. The communist Left Opposition in the USSR fought against the arbitrary decrees of the bureaucratic regime in its struggle against the emerging totalitarian dictatorship of Stalinism. All parties and groups which have fought for the emancipation of the workers against antipopular dictatorships have acted in this way.

Those people who are not interested in the class struggle and who think that Marxism is outdated, "in the light of contemporary realities," attacked us yesterday for violating party discipline; they attack us today for violating the discipline imposed by the state power. This represents a spectacular intellectual contortion--brought up on dogmatic Marxism, they have rejected Marxism and kept the dogma. They have cast doubt on the value of Marxist theory, but, on the other hand, they do not doubt that the party cannot tolerate factions and that it is necessary to submit to the regime.

It is our hope that this letter will help clear up the ignorance about our document both for party and ZMS members at the university and will facilitate frank polemics dealing with its theses. We hope that this time the party and Communist Youth university committees--which have their own copies of this Open Letter--will permit those for whom it is really intended, i.e., all those members who want to read it, to apprise themselves of its contents.

Obviously we have no way of knowing whether the authorities will impose further administrative penalties on us as a result of this letter or decide to bring us to trial. Whatever happens, we believe that we have the full right to address to those political organizations which expelled us from their ranks an open letter explaining to all their members our point of view and the motives for our actions.

Reply to the Control Commission  
Of the United Polish Workers Party

By Antoni Zambrowski

[ Like Kuron and Modzelewski, Antoni Zambrowski was an instructor at the University of Warsaw. In the summer of 1966, apparently because of a May Day article written by him, he was ordered to submit his views in writing to the Control Commission of the United Polish Workers Party. His reply, printed below, cost him his party membership and university job. He was reported arrested during the March (1968) student demonstrations. Soon thereafter, the text of his 1966 reply to the Control Commission became available to the press of Western Europe. The translation below appeared in the March 22, 1968, issue of the London Times.

[ Antoni's father, Roman Zambrowski, was a prominent official in the Polish government both during the Stalin era and under Gomulka. During this year's student demonstrations, the elder Zambrowski, who is of Jewish ancestry, was one of the first victims of the regime's anti-Semitic purge of "Zionists, old Stalinists, and revisionists" from government posts as the alleged instigators of the students.

[ It is to be noted that while Antoni Zambrowski, in his document, distinguishes his own opposition views from those of Kuron and Modzelewski, he makes a point of referring to them as "a communist opposition" and champions their right to propagate their ideas. He also affords us a glimpse of the intense political debate and activity going on among Poland's young Marxists when, in addition to his own opposition position and that of Kuron and Modzelewski, he mentions in passing the existence of several other tendencies or groups.]

\* \* \*

I am a Marxist and communist, and for this reason I am a member of our party. For me, joining the party was a simple consequence of my way of life. As a 13-year-old boy I distributed pamphlets for the Polish Workers' (Communist) Party at the 1947 elections. In that same year I joined the Young Communists' League. But I must confess that, while accepting the ideological foundations of our party, I have a mass of reservations with respect to its current policy. I feel more sympathy with the standpoint of such communist parties as the Italian Communist Party (PCI) or the Union of Communists of Yugoslavia (SKJ). In my view, if we applied the policies of the PCI or the SKJ in Poland, we should have less political difficulties and considerably more influence in society.

The most valuable part of the Yugoslav party's programme seems to me to be their different interpretation of the party's role in the exercising of power. At present our party apparatus provides, in the words of Comrade Gomulka, "a specific, centralized authority... steering a direct course and regulating the life of the whole country." This leads to "an identification of the party with the apparatus of people's power" and to "the duplication of the work of the state apparatus." Another important element of the Yugoslav party's policy is the system of Workers' Councils and social self-administration which is extended to all levels of economic and administrative power. Two consequences of this are the autonomy of the trade unions, which do not belong to the state system but

are its partner, defending the interest of the working man, and the independent role of parliament towards government, thanks to which parliament genuinely is the highest organ of the state. The role of the SELPJ, the equivalent of our Front of National Unity, is also extremely valuable since it serves as a socialist tribunal of discussion. I approve of the Yugoslav party's policy of a consistent and systematic development of democracy inside both party and state.

I think that the process of overcoming the consequences of Stalin's autocracy was begun but not concluded by the twentieth and twenty-second Congresses of the Soviet Communist Party. I fully support the view of Comrade Togliatti expressed in his Yalta testament criticizing the policies of these communist parties which now hold power. It is a question of, in his words, "removing the system introduced by Stalin whereby democratic freedoms and personal liberties were restricted and choked." The problem is that "the return to the Leninist norm, which ensured both inside and outside the party a broad freedom of speech and discussion in culture, art and also politics, is a slow process which is meeting some resistance. This slowness and resistance are incomprehensible to us."

I think the party should embark on a far-reaching programme for democratizing public life. This would entail successive stages in the controlled development of socialist democracy:

1) the development of democracy inside the party by bringing back all the Leninist norms of party life, for instance, the right of individual members to organize different platforms at party conferences and congresses, and to put these platforms to the vote.

2) the granting of independence to social organizations such as trade unions and youth organizations.

3) a change in the voting regulations, beginning with the lowest organs of the state and leading up by successive stages of power to elections to the Sejm (Parliament). These new regulations would foresee elections to one-seat constituencies with several competing candidates from the Front of National Unity, perhaps representing the same parties now existing in Poland--the United Workers' Party, the Peasants' Party, and the Democratic Front. This would follow the example of the United Arab Republic and Tanzania.

4) and only in the more distant future, a change to a political system which allowed a legal opposition, a party based on socialist principles and in accordance with the constitution of the Polish People's Republic.

The adoption of this programme, or one similar to it, which would gradually democratize our public life, would go a long way to relax the political tensions in our country. It would give our party the support of the broad masses of society.

My view on the case of Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski is as follows: Kuron and Modzelewski embarked on their activities through their impatience at the halting of the process of destalinization in Poland. Examples of this are the closing of the discussion club at the University of Warsaw, and the repressive measures taken against those who signed the letter of the 34 to the Prime Minister. These obstacles to consistent destalinization were taken by



them as an expression of the class interest of a "power elite," which is supposed to be building a new class to exploit the proletariat. Taking this view of the situation, they decided upon the historical inevitability of a social revolution of the proletariat. The victory of this revolution would open the way to the true building of socialism. The programme and tactics of this revolution were to be an exact copy of those of the Communist International, of which before the war the Communist Party of Poland formed part.

I do not support their point of view since I consider the changes begun by the October revolution of 1917 to be socialist changes. I review the bureaucratic deformation of revolutionary power as a transitory phase, peculiar to the period of construction of socialism--a disease which can be diagnosed and effectively cured by applying Marxist theory. It arises from the political superstructure and not from the foundations. This is why social revolution is not now inevitable. The problem is to repair socialism, not to bring it about by a violent agitation of the present state. The fight against the bureaucratic distortions of revolutionary power must be carried on so as not to endanger the achievements of socialism and, above all, socialist power.

While I reject the opinions of Kuron and Modzelewski, I still think that depriving them of liberty has brought great political harm to our country as well as to Poland's reputation in the world. The worst aspect of the affair has been the use of the Shorter Criminal Code against this communist opposition, a Code which was introduced just after the war during a period of national reconstruction, and was aimed against such reactionary underground organizations as the "Freedom and Independence" and "National Armed Forces" movements. I can see no justification in treating opposition groups within our party--such as the groups of Kuron and Modzelewski, of Badowski and Hass, or of Kazimierz Mijal--in the same way that the "National Armed Forces" bandits were treated. One is reminded of the type of behaviour that was outlined to us by Comrade Gomulka in his criticism of the methods used by Stalin to fight opposition within the Bolshevik movement.

My view on the conflict with the Church hierarchy is as follows: We cannot consolidate the achievements of socialism without the firm support of the whole of the working class. But unfortunately the vast majority of the members of our working class are believers. Our dialogue with Roman Catholics is designed to ensure for our party the support of the working masses. We cannot allow the quarrel with Cardinal Wyszyński to be treated by the Catholic masses as a "Kulturkampf" against the Church, since this would isolate us from an important part of the society. Unfortunately the events of past years have combined with the present confrontation with the episcopate to give rise to such suspicions. Catholics have taken great exception to the difficulties they encounter in building new churches and religious schools, to the refusal to allow the Pope to come to Poland, as well as to "sacrilegious" acts of the People's Militia against a vehicle carrying an image of the Virgin Mary. All this is grist to the mill of reactionary clerics.

In reference to my May 1 article, I can only say that the most questioned part of my article does contain ideas which are widespread among modern Marxists. What is more, these ideas are a simple continuation of the ideas of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, which were silenced during the Stalinist period and brought into the daylight after the twentieth congress of the Soviet Communist Party--or earlier by the Yugoslav communists.

An Open Letter to Wladyslaw Gomulka  
and the Central Committee of the Polish Workers Party

By Isaac Deutscher

[Isaac Deutscher, the eminent Marxist scholar, journalist and lecturer, died in Rome on August 19, 1967. Born near Cracow of Polish Jewish parents, he had joined the Communist Party of Poland at the age of twenty. He participated in the forming of the Trotskyist Opposition and was expelled from the Polish CP in 1932. He was active in the Polish Trotskyist movement until 1938. The next year he left Poland as a political refugee and found asylum in England. His talents soon won him a prominent position in British journalism. Though politically unaffiliated, he remained a Marxist and a champion of the international struggle for socialism. His books on the Soviet Union and the East European countries brought him an international reputation. Undoubtedly his masterpiece is his trilogy on the life of Leon Trotsky: The Prophet Armed, The Prophet Unarmed and The Prophet Outcast. His death left unfinished a biography of Lenin.

[The final decade of Deutscher's career was intimately bound up with the international upsurge of the youth and student movements. He was a frequent and favorite lecturer to radical student audiences in Europe and America. His speech at the teach-in at the University of California at Berkeley was, for example, one of the high points of the anti-Vietnam-war struggle in the United States. He also served on the International War Crimes Tribunal organized by Bertrand Russell.

[Deutscher also remained in close affinity with the militant anti-bureaucratic student movements of the Soviet-bloc countries. Naturally, he was extremely interested in and sympathetic to that movement in his native Poland. The following letter of protest was written by him on April 24, 1966, and released to the British press four days later. ]

\* \* \*

I am addressing this Letter to you in order to protest against the recent secret trials and convictions of Ludwik Hass, Karol Modzelewski, Kazimierz Badowski, Romuald Smiech, Kuron, and other members of your Party. According to all available reports, these men have been deprived of liberty solely because they have voiced views critical of your policy or certain aspects of it, and because they have expressed disappointment with the bureaucratic arbitrariness and corruption which they see rampant in their country. The charge against them is that they have circulated leaflets and a pamphlet containing "false information detrimental to the State and its supreme authorities"--the Public Prosecutor, it seems, did not accuse them of any crime or offense graver than that.

If this is the accusation, then the persecution of these men is disgraceful and scandalous. Several questions must be asked: Why, in the first instance, have the Courts held their hearings in camera? Surely, no matter of State se-

curity was or could have been involved. All the defendants have been academic teachers and students, and what they have tried to do was to communicate their views to fellow students. Why have they not been given a fair and open trial? Why have your own newspapers not even summarized the indictments and the pleas of defence? Is it because the proceedings have been so absurd and shameful that you yourselves feel that you cannot justify or excuse them; and so you prefer to cover them with silence and oblivion? As far as I know, Prosecutor and judges have not impugned the defendants' motives or cast any serious doubt on their integrity. The accused men have proclaimed themselves to be, and have behaved like, devoted non-conformist Communists, profoundly convinced of the truth and validity of revolutionary Marxism.

I know that one of them Ludwik Hass was, even before the second World War, a member of the Communist, so-called Trotskyist, organization, of which I was one of the founders and mouthpiece. He then spent 17 years in Stalin's prisons, concentration camps, and places of deportation. Released in 1957, he returned to Poland so free from all bitterness and so strongly animated by his faith in a better Socialist future that he at once decided to join your Party; and he was accepted as member. No one asked him to renounce his past, and he did not deny his old "Trotskyist" views even for a moment--on the contrary, he upheld them frankly and untiringly. This circumstance alone testifies to his courage and integrity. Do you, Wladyslaw Gomulka, really believe that you have, in your "apparatus" and administration, many people of comparable disinterestedness and idealism? Look around you, look at the crowds of time-servers that surround you, at all those opportunists without principle and honor who fawn on you as they fawned on Bierut, and as some of them fawned even on Rydz-Smigly and Pilsudski. On how many of these bureaucrats can your Government, and can Socialism, count in an hour of danger, as it can count on the people you have put in prison?

Recently still your Government claimed with a certain pride that there were no political prisoners in Poland since 1956. This claim, if true, was indeed something to be proud of in a country the jails of which had always, under all regimes, been full of political prisoners, especially of Communist prisoners. You have not, as far as I know, jailed and put in chains any of your all too numerous and virulent anti-Communist opponents; and you deserve credit for the moderation with which you treat them. But why do you deny such treatment to your critics on the Left? Hass, Modzelewski and their friends have been brought to the Courtrooms hand-cuffed and under heavy guards. Eye-witness accounts say that they raised their chained fists in the old Communist salute and sang the Internationale. This detail speaks eloquently about their political characters and loyalties. How many of your dignitaries, Wladyslaw Gomulka, would nowadays intone the Internationale of their own free will and choice?

I have been informed that before the trial, during the interrogation, the official who conducted it alleged that Hass and other defendants had worked in contact with me. I do not know whether the Prosecutor took up this charge in the Courtroom. In any case, the allegation is a complete falsehood. Let me say that if the defendants had tried to get in touch with me, I would have readily responded. But the fact is that I have had no contact whatsoever with any of them. I have not even seen a single one of their leaflets or pamphlets.

I judge their behaviour solely from reports reaching me by word of mouth or through Western European newspapers.

I ought perhaps to explain that since the second World War I have not participated in Polish political life in any way; and that, not being a member of any political organization, Trotskyist or otherwise, I am speaking only for myself. I should add, however, that on a few very rare occasions I have broken my self-imposed political abstinence. I protested when you, Wladyslaw Gomulka, were imprisoned and slandered in the last years of the Stalin era. Knowing full well that I could not share all your views, I expressed solidarity with you. Similarly, I do not know whether I can fully approve the views and behaviour of Hass, Modzelewski and their comrades. But in their case as in yours I think I can recognize reactionary police terror for what it is and tell slander from truth.

Another occasion on which I allowed myself to have a say on Polish political matters was in 1957, when I explained in a special essay "The Tragedy of Polish Communism between the World Wars." You may remember that your censors, Stalinists of the so-called Natolin group, confiscated the essay when Polityka tried to publish it; and that then you, Wladyslaw Gomulka, ordered the essay to be widely distributed among Party members. In those far-off days, just after the "Polish spring in October," you held that Polish Communists ought to know my account of the havoc that Stalin made of their Party, delivering nearly all its leaders to the firing squad. You knew that I had been one of those very few Communists who, in 1938, protested against that crime and against the disbandment and denigration of what had once been our common Party. Moscow "rehabilitated" the Polish Party and its leaders only after 17 or 18 years; and then you, Wladyslaw Gomulka, apologized for having kept silent in 1938, although you had not believed the Stalinist slanders. I do not believe that you are right now in persecuting and imprisoning members of your own Party and your critics on the Left; and I cannot keep silent.

May I remind you of your own words spoken at the famous 8th Session of the Central Committee in October 1956? "The cult of the personality was not a matter just of Stalin's person," you stated then. "This was a system which had been transplanted from the USSR to nearly all Communist Parties... We have finished, or rather we are finishing with that system once and for all." (Your italics.)

But are you not to some extent reestablishing that system? Do you wish these trials to mark the tenth anniversary of your own rehabilitation and of that "spring in October," during which you raised so many hopes for the future?

In the name of those hopes and in the name of your own record, the record of a fighter and of a political prisoner under Pilsudski and Stalin, I appeal to you and to your colleagues of the Central Committee: Do not allow this miscarriage of justice to last! Dispel the secrecy that surrounds the cases of Hass, Modzelewski, and comrades. If you think that they are guilty of grave offences, then publish the full report of the Court proceedings and let it speak for itself. In any case, I appeal to you to order an immediate and public revision of the trial. If you refuse these demands, you will stand condemned as epigones of Stalinism, guilty of stifling your own Party and compromising the future of Socialism.



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